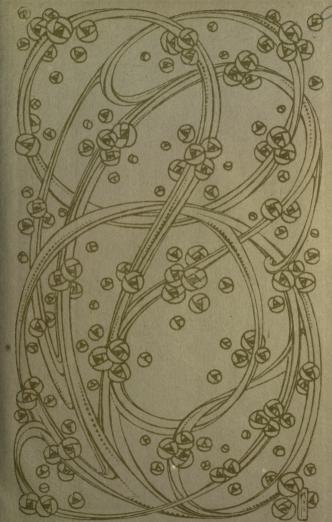
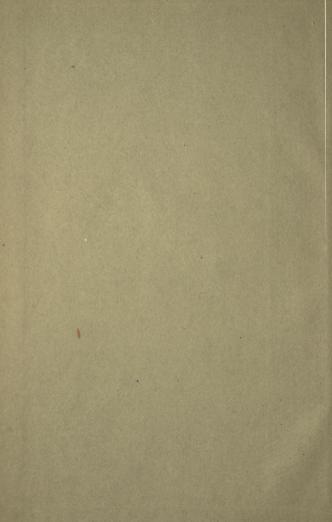




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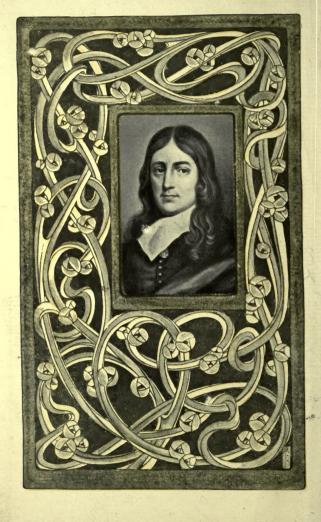
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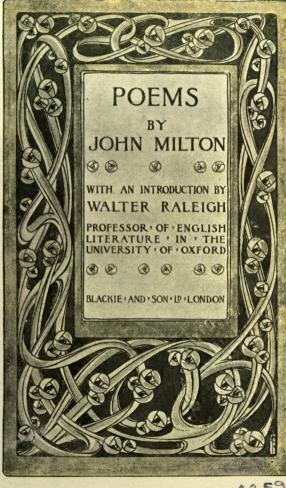
JOHN MILTON

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Except a few Sonnets and some fragments of translated verse these minor poems of Milton were all collected by himself, and published by Humphrey Moseley in 1645. Poetry to Milton was not a recreation, but the main business and purpose of his life, to be set aside only in the name of that duty which every man owes to his country. When at last his blindness and the defeat of his political hopes brought him his long-deferred opportunity, the heavenly Muse to whose service he dedicated himself suggested to him no slight or occasional themes. His shorter poems belong to the time of his youth. and contain a record, less explicit than Wordsworth's "Prelude", but no less clear, of the growth of a poet's mind. He tries many subjects, and is touched by many influences, while his own severe and lofty style disengages itself, slowly but surely, from the fashions of the day. He is a poor imitator, and ill at ease as a disciple of his contemporaries. In the earlier of these poems will be found, what will not be found later, examples of diffuse, empty, and fanciful writing. The couplets "On the Uni-

versity Carrier" would do no credit to a poetaster of the Eighteenth Century. The conceits embroidered on the theme of "The Passion" have nothing of the magic of Donne, nothing even of the agility of Cartwright, Cleveland, and the lesser Fantastics. Even while he follows the prevailing mode, Milton is never a believer in his own conceits; he knows them for the fond fancies that people an idle brain, the dreams of selfindulgent melancholv. In "The Passion" he imagines himself weeping on the mountains and awakening the echoes; but the violent fantasy which the echoes suggest to him is unreal, and he knows it, and apologizes for it:

"And I (for grief is easily beguiled)

Might think the infection of my sorrows loud

Had got a race of mourners on some pregnant
cloud".

The subject of the poem is the Passion of Christ, and we need not wonder that at this point the author, "nothing satisfied with what was begun", left his verses unfinished. Throughout his experiments he was haunted by a sense of what was to be his right work. In the verses "At a Vacation Exercise" he entangles himself in the trivialities of an academy, but protests that his native lan-

guage would be better employed in a more serious attempt, which should tax its resources to the uttermost:

"Yet I had rather, if I were to choose,
Thy service in some graver subject use,
Such as may make thee search thy coffers
round,

Before thou clothe my fancy in fit sound: Such where the deep transported mind may soar

Above the wheeling poles".

Already, before he was nineteen, he was dreaming of the great achievement of his later years.

Simplicity, gravity, and a keen and delicate enjoyment of beauty are the qualities that give their high and unmatched distinction to the best of Milton's earlier poems. The modern reader may truly confess, with Sir Henry Wotton, that he has "seen yet nothing parallel in our language" to the songs and odes of "Comus", or the elegy on Lycidas, or the twin poems with the Italian names. It was not for nothing that Milton professed himself a follower of Spenser; he was a Puritan to the core, and his early poems show us the youth of Puritanism, unexercised and unembittered. From these two poets we can learn something of the

clear dreams and solemn visions that were soon to be obscured in the smoke of the conflict. The almost unearthly beauty of Milton's earlier poems is the beauty that illumines the face of the young warrior, dedicated to a high and difficult enterprise, and tarrying for a while, until the trumpet shall sound, among the fair and peaceful things of earth. Ease and unguarded pleasure, jest and youthful jollity (though he invokes them) are not for him; yet his sense of beauty and innocent delight is tragically quickened by a foreboding of the trial that is to come. Thyrsis, the shepherd of the valley,

"whose artful strains have oft delayed The huddling brooks to hear his madrigal, And sweetened every musk-rose of the dale",

is destined soon to cast off his pastoral disguise, and to celebrate, in epic panoply,

"What the sage poets, taught by the heavenly Muse,

Storied of old in high immortal verse Of dire Chimeras and enchanted isles, And rifted rocks whose entrance leads to Hell".

The pathos that is felt by most men when they look back, across a strenuous and troubled life, on the fallacious hopes and careless enjoyments of youth, is discerned already by this virgin warrior while he is still a denisen of the golden world. He feels the charm and loveliness of his surroundings, even to rapture, but he is mindful of the future, and tastes of pleasure warily, nursing in himself the virtues of self-discipline, and temperance, and courage. The pleasures that can endure the fervour of his temper and the stress of his judgment must be pleasures without alloy of satiety or deceit.

The same severity of discipline is seen. during these early years, chastening and strengthening his style and diction. No one who cares for poetry as poets care for it will ever make light of a question of diction. The ease-loving populace cries for truth and vividness of emotion as it cries for victory in war, and is too ignorant and careless to paymuch attention to the instruments whereby victory is won. All great poetic truths are as old as the heart of man, though each generation of mankind must discern them anew for itself. When they are rediscovered, and sincerely expressed, with intelligence and feeling, in melodious cadences and live phrases chosen from the ever-shifting language of man, poetry is born. The truth of poetry lies in its sincerity, and the question

of sincerity is a question of diction. By their diction good poets are known from pretenders. Milton, in the opening lines of "Lycidas", expresses a fear that his powers are not ripe for the work of poetry. The same misgiving has occurred to other young poets. It occurred to a forgotten contemporary of Milton's, a certain N. W., Master of Arts, who, in the year 1638, produced a book of verses called "Albino and Bellama". The address of the author to his book begins thus:

"Goe, gall-less infant of my teeming Quill,
Not yet bedew'd in Syracusa's rill,
That like a forward plover gad'st abroad
Ere shell-free, or before full age has straw'd
On thy smooth backe a coat of feathers,
To arme thee 'gainst the force of weathers'".

A year earlier Milton had given expression, in other language, to a thought of the same purport:

"Yet once more, O ye laurels, and once more Ye myrtles brown, with ivy never sere, I come to pluck your berries harsh and crude, And with forced fingers rude
Shatter your leaves before the mellowing year".

The thought is the same, and the expression hardly less figurative, yet Milton's lines take us into a world unknown to the forward plover and the teeming quill, a world of sincere and deep feeling. The difference between the two poems is only an extreme instance of the difference everywhere to be found between the measured beauty of Milton's early poems and the ingenious contortions of the Caroline school of Fantastic poets.

There are poets, some of the greatest among the number, who are dangerous masters to follow. Shakespeare, the greatest of those who have written in English, is the despair of his imitators. He lets go with both hands, so to say, and pursues his headlong course "to the shame of slow-endeavouring art". He commits enough faults to furnish half a dozen bad poets with a warrant for their extravagance, carelessness, dulness; and then, paying no heed to correction, he drowns his errors in a galaxy of splendours. The economists and masters of thrift, the Puritans of art, are safer and better teachers. From Milton, the greatest of the Puritans, may be learned the lesson of deliberation and exactitude, the work of the balance and the file. In his beautiful and ordered lines there is no waste and no void. The words, carefully chosen for the sense they have to carry, fit into their places like the blocks of a marble building. In the poems of his later age there is a nakedness

of studied simplicity which repels some of his readers, who find it difficult to recognize wealth that is not lavish of its goods, and freedom that is not rebellious to law. It would be absurd to blame even lovers of Milton who profess themselves unable to appreciate off-hand those beauties of severity and restraint which the loftiest spirit among English poets achieved only at the close of a life of suffering. Not everyone is fitted to bear the burden of Samson. It is a permissible relief to turn away from the colossal images of the twilight grove, and to seek Milton in the flowery haunts of his youth, where he is found listening with wistful pleasure to the songs of the shepherds, and approving the dances of the nymbhs. He is a pilgrim and a stranger among these delights; but the natural joys of earth are not the less moving to him because his heart is set on a far country and his arm nerved for a struggle to the death.

WALTER RALEIGH.

11th January, 1905

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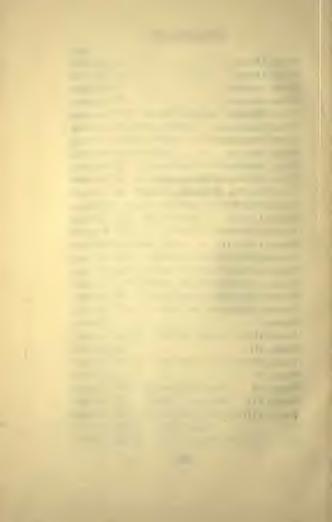
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A Paraphrase on Psalm CXIV

THIS AND THE FOLLOW-ING PSALM WERE DONE BY THE AUTHOR AT FIFTEEN YEARS OLD

When the blest seed of Terah's faithful son,

After long toil, their liberty had won, And past from Pharian fields to Canaan land,

Led by the strength of the Almighty's hand,

Jehovah's wonders were in Israel shown, His praise and glory was in Israel known. That saw the troubled Sea, and shivering fled.

And sought to hide his froth-becurled head Low in the earth; Jordan's clear streams recoil,

As a faint host that hath receiv'd the foil. The high huge-bellied mountains skip like rams

Amongst their ewes, the little hills like lambs.

(B246) I H

PARAPHRASE ON PSALM CXIV

Why fled the ocean? And why skipt the mountains?

Why turned Jordan toward his crystal fountains?

Shake, Earth; and at the presence be aghast

Of Him that ever was, and aye shall last; That glassy floods from rugged rocks can crush.

And make soft rills from fiery flint-stones gush.

Psalm CXXXVI

Let us with a gladsome mind
Praise the Lord, for he is kind;
For his mercies aye endure,
Ever faithful, ever sure.

Let us blaze his Name abroad, For of gods he is the God; For his etc.

O let us his praises tell, Who doth the wrathful tyrants quell; For his etc.

Who with his miracles doth make Amazed Heaven and Earth to shake; For his etc.

Who by his wisdom did create
The painted heavens so full of state;
For his etc.

Who did the solid earth ordain To rise above the watery plain; For his etc.

PSALM CXXXVI

Who by his all-commanding might Did fill the new-made world with light; For his etc.

And caus'd the golden-tressed sun All the day long his course to run; For his etc.

The norned moon to shine by night, Amongst her spangled sisters bright; For his etc.

He, with his thunder-clasping hand, Smote the first-born of Egypt land; For his etc.

And, in despite of Pharaoh fell, He brought from thence his Israël; For his etc.

The ruddy waves he cleft in twain
Of the Erythræan main;
For his etc.

The floods stood still, like walls of glass, While the Hebrew bands did pass; For his etc.

But full soon they did devour
The tawny king with all his power;
For his etc.

PSALM CXXXVI

His chosen people he did bless In the wasteful wilderness; For his etc.

In bloody battle he brought down Kings of prowess and renown: For his etc.

He foil'd bold Seon and his host, That rul'd the Amorrean coast; For his etc.

And large-limb'd Og he did subdue, With all his over-hardy crew; For his etc.

And, to his servant Israël
He gave their land therein to dwell;
For his etc.

He hath with a piteous eye Beheld us in our misery; For his etc.

And freed us from the slavery Of the invading enemy; For his etc.

All living creatures he doth feed, And with full hand supplies their need; For his etc.

PSALM CXXXVI

Let us therefore warble forth His mighty majesty and worth; For his etc.

That his mansion hath on high Above the reach of mortal eye; For his mercies aye endure, Ever faithful, ever sure.

On the Death of a Fair Infant, Dying of a Cough

D

I

O fairest flower, no sooner blown but blasted,

Soft silken primrose fading timelessly,

Summer's chief honour, if thou hadst outlasted

Bleak Winter's force that made thy blossom dry;

For he, being amorous on that lovely dye That did thy cheek envermeil, thought to kiss,

But kill'd, alas; and then bewail'd his fatal bliss.

H

For since grim Aquilo, his charioteer, By boisterous rape the Athenian damsel got,

He thought it touch'd his deity full near, If likewise he some fair one wedded not, Thereby to wipe away the infamous blot

ON THE DEATH OF

Of long-uncoupled bed and childless eld, Which, 'mongst the wanton gods, a foul reproach was held.

III

So, mounting up in icy-pearled car, Through middle empire of the freezing

He wander'd long till thee he spied from far;

There ended was his quest, there ceas'd his care:

Down he descended from his snow-soft chair,

But, all unwares, with his cold-kind embrace

Unhous'd thy virgin soul from her fair biding place.

137

Yet art thou not inglorious in thy fate;
For so Apollo, with unweeting hand,
Whilom did slay his dearly-loved mate,
Young Hyacinth, born on Eurotas' strand,
Young Hyacinth, the pride of Spartan
land;

But then transform'd him to a purple flower:

Alack, that so to change thee Winter had no power!

A FAIR INFANT

V

Yet can I not persuade me thou art dead, Or that thy corse corrupts in earth's dark womb,

Or that thy beauties lie in wormy bed, Hid from the world in a low-delved tomb: Could Heaven, for pity, thee so strictly doom?

Oh no! for something in thy face did shine

Above mortality, that show'd thou wast divine.

VI

Resolve me then, oh Soul most surely blest,

(If so it be that thou these plaints dost hear;)

Tell me, bright Spirit, where'er thou hoverest,

Whether above that high first-moving sphere,

Or in the Elysian fields, (if such there were;)

Oh say me true, if thou wert mortal wight,

And why from us so quickly thou didst take thy flight?

ON THE DEATH OF

VII

Wert thou some star which from the ruin'd roof

Of shak'd Olympus by mischance didst fall;

Which careful Jove in Nature's true behoof Took up, and in fit place did reinstall?

Or did of late Earth's sons besiege the wall

Of sheeny Heaven, and thou, some goddess fled,

Amongst us here below to hide thy nectar'd head?

VIII

Or wert thou that just Maid, who once before

Forsook the hated earth, O tell me sooth, And cam'st again to visit us once more? Or wert thou that sweet-smiling youth?

Or that crown'd matron, sage white-robed Truth?

Or any other of that heavenly brood Let down in cloudy throne to do the world some good?

IX

Or wert thou of the golden-winged host, Who, having clad thyself in human weed,

A FAIR INFANT

To earth from thy prefixed seat didst post,

And after short abode fly back with speed, As if to show what creatures heaven doth breed:

Thereby to set the hearts of men on fire To scorn the sordid world, and unto heaven aspire?

X

But oh! why didst thou not stay here below

To bless us with thy heaven-lov'd innocence,

To slake His wrath whom sin hath made our foe,

To turn swift-rushing black Perdition hence,

Or drive away the slaughtering Pestilence, To stand 'twixt us and our deserved smart?

But thou canst best perform that office where thou art.

ΧI

Then thou, the Mother of so sweet a Child,

Her false-imagin'd loss cease to lament,

A FAIR INFANT

And wisely learn to curb thy sorrows wild; Think what a present thou to God hast sent,

And render Him with patience what He lent;

This if thou do, He will an offspring give,

That, till the world's last end, shall make thy name to live.

Anno Ætatis XIX

AT A VACATION EXERCISE IN THE COLLEGE, PART LATIN, PART ENGLISH.

The Latin Speeches ended, the English thus began:—

Hail, native Language, that by sinews

Didst move my first endeavouring tongue to speak,

And mad'st imperfect words with childish trips,

Half unpronounc'd, slide through my infant lips,

Driving dumb Silence from the portal door,

Where he had mutely sat two years before: Here I salute thee, and thy pardon ask That now I use thee in my latter task:

Small loss it is that thence can come unto thee.

I know my tongue but little grace can do thee:

ANNO ÆTATIS XIX

Thou need'st not be ambitious to be first, Believe me I have thither pack'd the worst:

And, if it happen as I did forecast,

The daintiest dishes shall be serv'd up last.

I pray thee then deny me not thy aid

For this same small neglect that I have made:

But haste thee straight to do me once a pleasure,

And from thy wardrobe bring thy chiefest treasure,

Not those new-fangled toys, and trimming slight,

Which takes our late fantasticks with delight;

But cull those richest robes, and gay'st attire,

Which deepest spirits and choicest wits desire.

I have some naked thoughts that rove about,

And loudly knock to have their passage out;

And, weary of their place, do only stay, Till thou hast deck'd them in thy best array;

That so they may, without suspect or fears, Fly swiftly to this fair assembly's ears;

Yet I had rather, if I were to chuse, Thy service in some graver subject use, Such as may make thee search thy coffers round,

Before thou clothe my fancy in fit sound: Such where the deep transported mind may soar

Above the wheeling poles, and at Heaven's door

Look in, and see each blissful deity

How he before the thunderous throne doth
lie,

Listening to what unshorn Apollo sings To the touch of golden wires, while Hebe brings

Immortal nectar to her kingly sire:

Then passing through the spheres of watchful fire,

And misty regions of wide air next under, And hills of snow, and lofts of piled thunder, May tell at length how green-ey'd Neptune rayes.

In Heaven's defiance mustering all his waves;

Then sing of secret things that came to pass

When beldam Nature in her cradle was; And last of kings, and queens, and heroes old,

Such as the wise Demodocus once told

In solemn songs at king Alcinous' feast, While sad Ulysses' soul, and all the rest, Are held, with his melodious harmony, In willing chains and sweet captivity. But fie, my wandering Muse, how thou

dost stray!

Expectance calls thee now another way; Thou know'st it must be now thy only bent To keep in compass of thy predicament: Then quick about thy purpos'd business come.

That to the next I may resign my room.

Then Ens is represented as Father of the Predicaments, his two sons, whereof the eldest stood for Substance with his Canons, which Ens, thus speaking, explains:—

Good luck befriend thee, Son; for, at thy birth,

The faery ladies danc'd upon the hearth; Thy drowsy nurse hath sworn she did them spie

Come tripping to the room where thou didst lie.

And, sweetly singing round about thy bed, Strew all their blessings on thy sleeping head.

She heard them give thee this, that thou shouldst still

From eyes of mortals walk invisible:

Yet there is something that doth force my fear;

For once it was my dismal hap to hear A Sibyl old, bow-bent with crooked age, That far events full wisely could presage,

That far events full wisely could presage, And, in Time's long and dark prospective glass,

Foresaw what future days should bring to pass;

"Your son," said she, "(nor can you it prevent)

Shall subject be to many an Accident.

O'er all his brethren he shall reign as king, Yet every one shall make him underling; And those, that cannot live from him asunder,

Ungratefully shall strive to keep him under;

In worth and excellence he shall out-go them,

Yet, being above them, he shall be below them;

From others he shall stand in need of nothing,

Yet on his brothers shall depend for clothing.

To find a foe it shall not be his hap,

And Peace shall lull him in her flowery lap; Yet shall he live in strife, and at his door Devouring war shall never cease to roar; (B 246)

Yea, it shall be his natural property
To harbour those that are at enmity.
What power, what force, what mighty
spell, if not

Your learned hands, can loose this Gordian knot?"

The next, QUANTITY and QUALITY, spake in prose; then RELATION was called by his name.

Rivers, arise; whether thou be the son Of utmost Tweed, or Ouse, or gulphy Dun, Or Trent, who, like some Earth-born giant, spreads

His thirty arms along the indented meads; Or sullen Mole, that runneth underneath; Or Severn swift, guilty of maiden's death; Or rocky Avon, or of sedgy Lea,

Or coaly Tyne, or ancient hallow'd Dee;

Or Humber loud, that keeps the Scythian's name:

Or Medway smooth, or royal-tower'd Thame.

The rest was prose.

On the Morning of Christ's Nativity

T

This is the month, and this the happy morn,

Wherein the Son of Heaven's Eternal King, Of wedded Maid and Virgin Mother born, Our great redemption from above did bring;

For so the holy sages once did sing,
That he our deadly forfeit should release,
And with his Father work us a perpetual
peace

H

That glorious form, that light unsufferable, And that far-beaming blaze of majesty, Wherewith he wont at Heaven's high council-table

To sit the midst of Trinal Unity,
He laid aside; and, here with us to be,
Forsook the courts of everlasting day,
And chose with us a darksome house of
mortal clay.

ON THE MORNING OF

III

Say, heavenly Muse, shall not thy sacred vein

Afford a present to the Infant God? Hast thou no verse, no hymn, or solemn strain.

To welcome him to this his new abode, Now while the heaven, by the sun's team untrod.

Hath took no print of the approaching light,

And all the spangled host keep watch in squadrons bright?

IV

See how from far upon the eastern road The star-led wisards haste with odours sweet:

O run, prevent them with thy humble ode, And lay it lowly at his blessed feet; Have thou the honour first thy Lord to

greet,

And join thy voice unto the Angel quire, From out his secret altar touch'd with hallow'd fire.

CHRIST'S NATIVITY

THE HYMN

I

It was the winter wild,
While the heaven-born child
All meanly wrapt in the rude manger
lies:

lies;
Nature, in awe to him,
Had doff'd her gaudy trim,
With her great Master so to sympathize:
It was no season then for her
To wanton with the sun, her lusty para-

H

mour.

Only with speeches fair
She woos the gentle air
To hide her guilty front with innocent snow:

And on her naked shame,
Pollute with sinful blame,
The saintly veil of maiden white to
throw:

Confounded, that her Maker's eyes Should look so near upon her foul deformaties.

ш

But He, her fears to cease, Sent down the meek-ey'd Peace;

ON THE MORNING OF

She, crown'd with olive green, came softly sliding

Down through the turning sphere, His ready harbinger,

With turtle wing the amorous clouds dividing;

And, waving wide her myrtle wand,
She strikes a universal peace through sea

IV

No war, or battle's sound, Was heard the world around:

The idle spear and shield were high uphung;

The hooked chariot stood Unstain'd with hostile blood;

The trumpet spake not to the armed throng;

And kings sat still with awful eye,
As if they surely knew their sovran Lord
was by.

V

But peaceful was the night,
Wherein the Prince of light
His reign of Peace upon the earth began:
The winds, with wonder whist,
Smoothly the waters kist,

CHRIST'S NATIVITY

Whispering new joys to the mild ocean, Who now hath quite forgot to rave, While birds of calm sit brooding on the charmed wave.

VI

The stars, with deep amaze, Stand fix'd in stedfast gaze, Bending one way their precious influ-

ence; And will not take their flight, For all the morning light,

Or Lucifer that often warn'd them thence:

But in their glimmering orbs did glow, Until their Lord himself bespake, and bid them go.

VII

And, though the shady gloom Had given day her room,

The sun himself withheld his wonted speed,

And hid his head for shame,

As his inferiour flame

The new-enlighten'd world no more should need:

He saw a greater sun appear

Than his bright throne, or burning axletree, could bear.

ON THE MORNING OF

VIII

The shepherds on the lawn,
Or ere the point of dawn,
Sat simply chatting in a rustick row;
Full little thought they than
That the mighty Pan
Was kindly come to live with them

Was kindly come to live with them below;

Perhaps their loves, or else their sheep, Was all that did their silly thoughts so busy keep.

IX

When such musick sweet
Their hearts and ears did greet,
As never was by mortal finger strook;
Divinely-warbled voice
Answering the stringed noise,
As all their souls in blissful rapture took:
The air, such pleasure loth to lose,
With thousand echoes still prolongs each heavenly close.

X

Nature that heard such sound, Beneath the hollow round Of Cynthia's seat, the aery region thrilling,

CHRIST'S NATIVITY

Now was almost won
To think her part was done,
And that her reign had here its last fulfilling;
She knew such harmony alone
Could hold all Heaven and Earth in

XI

happier union.

born Heir.

Such musick (as 't is said)

At last surrounds their sight
A globe of circular light,
That with long beams the shamefac'd night array'd;
The helmed Cherubim,
And sworded Seraphim,
Are seen in glittering ranks with wings display'd,
Harping in loud and solemn quire,
With unexpressive notes, to Heaven's new-

XII

Before was never made,
But when of old the sons of morning sung,
While the Creator Great
His constellations set,
And the well-balanc'd world on hinges hung;

ON THE MORNING OF

And cast the dark foundations deep, And bid the weltering waves their oozy channel keep.

XIII

Ring out, ye crystal spheres, Once bless our human ears,

If ye have power to touch our senses so:

And let your silver chime Move in melodious time.

And let the base of Heaven's deep organ blow:

And, with your ninefold harmony,

Make up full consort to the angelick symphony.

XIV

For, if such holy song Inwrap our fancy long,

Time will run back, and fetch the age of gold;

And speckled Vanity

Will sicken soon and die,

And leprous Sin will melt from earthly mould;

And Hell itself will pass away,

And leave her dolorous mansions to the peering day.

26

CHRIST'S NATIVITY

XV

Yea, Truth and Justice then
Will down return to men,
Orb'd in a rainbow; and, like glories
wearing.

Mercy will sit between, Thron'd in celestial sheen,

With radiant feet the tissued clouds down steering;

And Heaven, as at some festival, Will open wide the gates of her nigh palace hall.

XVI

But wisest Fate says no,
This must not yet be so,
The Babe yet lies in smiling infancy,
That on the bitter cross
Must redeem our loss;
So both himself and us to glorify:
Yet first, to those ychain'd in sleep,
The wakeful trump of doom must thunder
through the deep

XVII

With such a horrid clang As on mount Sinai rang,

ON THE MORNING OF

While the red fire and smouldering clouds out brake:

The aged earth aghast,

With terrour of that blast,

Shall from the surface to the center shake;

When, at the world's last session, The dreadful Judge in middle air shall

spread his throne.

XVIII

And then at last our bliss Full and perfect is,

But now begins; for, from this happy day,

The old Dragon, under ground In straiter limits bound,

Not half so far casts his usurped sway; And, wroth to see his kingdom fail, Swindges the scaly horrour of his folded

XIX

The oracles are dumb, No voice or hideous hum

tail.

Runs through the arched roof in words deceiving.

Apollo from his shrine Can no more divine,

CHRIST'S NATIVITY

With hollow shriek the steep of Delphos leaving.

No nightly trance, or breathed spell, Inspires the pale-ey'd priest from the prophetick cell.

XX

The lonely mountains o'er,

And the resounding shore,

A voice of weeping heard and loud

A voice of weeping heard and loud lament;

From haunted spring and dale, Edg'd with poplar pale,

The parting Genius is with sighing sent;

With flower-inwoven tresses torn

The Nymphs in twilight shade of tangled thickets mourn.

XXI

In consecrated earth,

And on the holy hearth,

The Lars and Lemures moan with mid-

night plaint; In urns, and altars round,

A drear and dying sound

Affrights the Flamens at their service quaint;

And the chill marble seems to sweat, While each peculiar Power foregoes his

wonted seat.

ON THE MORNING OF

XXII

Forsake their temples dim,
With that twice-batter'd God of Palestine;
And mooned Ashtaroth,
Heaven's queen and mother both,
Now sits not girt with tapers' holy shine;
The Libyck Hammon shrinks his horn,
In vain the Tyrian maids their wounded

Thammuz mourn.

Peor and Baälim

XXIII

And sullen Moloch, fled,
Hath left in shadows dread
His burning idol all of blackest hue;
In vain with cymbals' ring
They call the grisly king,
In dismal dance about the furnace blue:

In dismal dance about the furnace blue: The brutish gods of Nile as fast, Isis, and Orus, and the dog Anubis, haste.

XXIV

Nor is Osiris seen
In Memphian grove or green
Trampling the unshower'd grass with
lowings loud:
Nor can he be at rest
Within his sacred chest;

CHRIST'S NATIVITY

Nought but profoundest hell can be his shroud;

In vain with timbrell'd anthems dark
The sable-stoled sorcerers bear his worshipt ark.

XXV

He feels from Juda's land
The dreaded Infant's hand,
The rays of Bethlehem blind his dusky eyn;
Nor all the gods beside
Longer dare abide,

Not Typhon huge ending in snaky twine: Our Babe, to show his Godhead true, Can in his swaddling bands controul the damned crew.

XXVI

So, when the sun in bed,
Curtain'd with cloudy red,
Pillows his chin upon an orient wave,
The flocking shadows pale
Troop to the infernal jail,
Each fetter'd ghost slips to his several
grave,

And the yellow-skirted Fayes
Fly after the night-steeds, leaving their
moon-lov'd maze.

CHRIST'S NATIVITY

XXVII

But see, the Virgin blest Hath laid her Babe to rest; Time is our tedious song should here have ending;

Heaven's youngest-teemed star Hath fix'd her polish'd car, Her sleeping Lord with handmaid lamp

attending:
And all about the courtly stable
Bright-harness'd Angels sit in order service-

Upon the Circumcision

Ye flaming Powers, and winged Warriours bright,

That erst with musick, and triumphant song,

First heard by happy watchful shepherds' ear,

So sweetly sung your joy the clouds along Through the soft silence of the listening night;

Now mourn; and, if sad share with us to bear

Your fiery essence can distil no tear, Burn in your sighs, and borrow Seas wept from our deep sorrow: He, who with all Heaven's heraldry whilere Enter'd the world, now bleeds to give us

Alas, how soon our sin
Sore doth begin
His infancy to seize!
(B 246)

ease:

UPON THE CIRCUMCISION

O more exceeding love, or law more just? Just law indeed, but more exceeding love! For we, by rightful doom remediless, Were lost in death, till he that dwelt above High-thron'd in secret bliss, for us frail dust Emptied his glory, even to nakedness; And that great covenant which we still

transgress
Entirely satisfied;

And the full wrath beside

Of vengeful justice bore for our excess; And seals obedience first, with wounding smart.

This day; but O! ere long, Huge pangs and strong

Will pierce more near his heart.

The Passion

I

Erewhile of musick, and ethereal mirth, Wherewith the stage of air and earth did ring,

And joyous news of heavenly Infant's birth, My Muse with Angels did divide to sing; But headlong joy is ever on the wing,

In wintry solstice like the shorten'd light, Soon swallow'd up in dark and long outliving night.

п

For now to sorrow must I tune my song, And set my harp to notes of saddest woe, Which on our dearest Lord did seize ere long,

Dangers, and snares, and wrongs, and worse than so,

Which he for us did freely undergo:
Most perfect Hero, tried in heaviest plight
Of labours huge and hard, too hard for
human wight!

THE PASSION

Ш

He, sovran priest, stooping his regal head, That dropt with odorous oil down his fair eyes,

Poor fleshy tabernacle entered,

His starry front low-rooft beneath the skies:
O, what a mask was there, what a disguise!
Yet more; the stroke of death he must abide.

Then lies him meekly down fast by his brethren's side.

IV

These latest scenes confine my roving verse; To this horizon is my Phœbus bound:

His Godlike acts, and his temptations fierce, And former sufferings, otherwhere are found;

Loud o'er the rest Cremona's trump doth sound;

Me softer airs befit, and softer strings Of lute, or viol still, more apt for mournful things.

V

Befriend me, Night, best patroness of grief; Over the pole thy thickest mantle throw, And work my flatter'd fancy to belief That Heaven and Earth are colour'd with my woe;

THE PASSION

My sorrows are too dark for day to know: The leaves should all be black whereon I write,

And letters, where my tears have wash'd, a wannish white.

VI

See, see the chariot, and those rushing wheels,

That whirl'd the Prophet up at Chebar flood; My spirit some transporting Cherub feels To bear me where the towers of Salem stood, Once glorious towers, now sunk in guiltless blood:

There doth my soul in holy vision sit, In pensive trance, and anguish, and ecstatick fit.

VII

Mine eye hath found that sad sepulchral rock

That was the casket of Heaven's richest store,

And here, though grief my feeble hands uplock,

Yet on the soften'd quarry would I score My plaining verse as lively as before;

For sure so well instructed are my tears, That they would fitly fall in order'd characters.

THE PASSION

VIII

Or, should I thence hurried on viewless wing

Take up a weeping on the mountains wild, The gentle neighbourhood of grove and spring

Would soon unbosom all their echoes mild; And I (for grief is easily beguil'd)

Might think the infection of my sorrows loud

Had got a race of mourners on some pregnant cloud.

This subject the Author finding to be above the years he had, when he wrote it, and nothing satisfied with what was begun, left it unfinished.

On Time

Fly, envious Time, till thou run out thy race:

Call on the lazy leaden-stepping hours, Whose speed is but the heavy plummet's pace;

And glut thyself with what thy womb devours.

Which is no more than what is false and vain,

And merely mortal dross;

So little is our loss,

So little is thy gain.

For when as each thing bad thou hast entomb'd,

And last of all thy greedy self consum'd, Then long Eternity shall greet our bliss With an individual kiss:

And Joy shall overtake us as a flood, When every thing that is sincerely good

And perfectly divine, With Truth, and Peace, and Love, shall

ever shine

ON TIME

About the supreme throne

Of Him, to whose happy-making sight alone

When once our heavenly-guided soul shall climb:

Then, all this earthy grossness quit,

Attir'd with stars, we shall for ever sit, Triumphing over Death, and Chance, and thee, O Time.

At a Solemn Musick

Blest pair of Syrens, pledges of Heaven's joy,

Sphere-born harmonious sisters, Voice and Verse,

Wed your divine sounds, and mix'd power employ

Dead things with inbreath'd sense able to pierce;

And to our high-rais'd phantasy present That undisturbed song of pure concent,

Aye sung before the sapphire-colour'd throne

To Him that sits thereon,

With saintly shout, and solemn jubilee; Where the bright Seraphim, in burning row.

Their loud up-lifted angel trumpets blow; And the Cherubick host, in thousand quires, Touch their immortal harps of golden wires,

With those just Spirits that wear victorious palms,

Hymns devout and holy psalms

AT A SOLEMN MUSICK

Singing everlastingly:

That we on earth, with undiscording voice, May rightly answer that melodious noise;

As once we did, till disproportion'd sin

Jarr'd against Nature's chime, and with harsh din

Broke the fair musick that all creatures made

To their great Lord, whose love their motion sway'd

In perfect diapason, whilst they stood

In first obedience, and their state of good.

O may we soon again renew that song.

And keep in tune with Heaven, till God ere long

To his celestial consort us unite,

To live with Him, and sing in endless morn of light!

Song on May Morning

Now the bright Morning-star, day's harbinger,

Comes dancing from the east, and leads with her

The flowery May, who from her green lap throws

The yellow cowslip and the pale primrose. Hail, bounteous May, that dost inspire Mirth, and youth, and warm desire; Woods and groves are of thy dressing, Hill and dale doth boast thy blessing. Thus we salute thee with our early song, And welcome thee, and wish thee long.

An Epitaph on the admirable Dramatick Poet, W. Shakspeare

What needs my Shakspeare for his honour'd bones

The labour of an age in piled stones?

Or that his hallow'd reliques should be hid

Under a star-ypointing pyramid?

Dear son of memory, great heir of fame, What need'st thou such weak witness of thy name?

Thou, in our wonder and astonishment,

Hast built thy self a live-long monument. For whilst, to the shame of slow-endeavouring art,

Thy easy numbers flow; and that each heart

Hath from the leaves of thy unvalued book Those Delphick lines with deep impression took;

EPITAPH ON SHAKSPEARE

Then thou, our fancy of itself bereaving, Dost make us marble with too much conceiving;

And, so sepúlcher'd in such pomp dost lie, That kings, for such a tomb, would wish to die.

On the University Carrier

WHO SICKENED IN THE TIME OF HIS VACANCY, BEING FOR-BID TO GO TO LONDON, BY REASON OF THE PLAGUE

Here lies old Hobson; Death hath broke his girt,

And here, alas! hath laid him in the dirt; Or else the ways being foul, twenty to one, He's here stuck in a slough, and overthrown.

'T was such a shifter, that, if truth were known,

Death was half glad when he had got him down;

For he had, any time this ten years full, Dodg'd with him betwixt Cambridge and *The Bull*.

And surely Death could never have prevail'd,

Had not his weekly course of carriage fail'd;

ON THE UNIVERSITY CARRIER

But lately finding him so long at home, And thinking now his journey's end was come,

And that he had ta'en up his latest inn, In the kind office of a chamberlin Show'd him his room where he must lodge that night,

Pull'd off his boots, and took away the light:

If any ask for him, it shall be sed, "Hobson has supt, and's newly gone to bed".

Another on the Same

Here lieth one who did most truly prove That he could never die while he could move:

So hung his destiny, never to rot While he might still jog on and keep his trot.

Made of sphere-metal, never to decay Until his revolution was at stay.

Time numbers motion, yet (without a crime

'Gainst old truth) motion number'd out his time:

And, like an engine, mov'd with wheel and weight,

His principles being ceas'd, he ended straight.

Rest, that gives all men life, gave him his death,

And too much breathing put him out of breath;

Nor were it contradiction to affirm, Too long vacation hasten'd on his term. Merely to drive the time away he sicken'd, Fainted, and died, nor would with ale be

quicken'd;

ANOTHER ON THE SAME

- "Nay," quoth he, on his swooning bed outstretch'd,
- "If I mayn't carry, sure I'll ne'er be fetch'd,
- But vow, though the cross doctors all stood hearers,
- For one carrier put down to make six bearers."
- Ease was his chief disease; and, to judge right,
- He died for heaviness that his cart went light:
- His leisure told him that his time was come,
- And lack of load made his life burdensome, That even to his last breath, (there be that say't,)
- As he were press'd to death, he cried, More weight;
- But, had his doings lasted as they were, He had been an immortal carrier.
- Obedient to the moon he spent his date
- In course reciprocal, and had his fate
- Link'd to the mutual flowing of the seas, Yet (strange to think) his wain was his
- encrease.
- His letters are deliver'd all and gone, Only remains this superscription.

An Epitaph on the Marchioness of Winchester

This rich marble doth inter
The honour'd wife of Winchester,
A Viscount's daughter, an Earl's heir,
Besides what her virtues fair
Added to her noble birth,
More than she could own from earth.
Summers three times eight save one
She had told; alas! too soon,
After so short time of breath,
To house with darkness, and with death.
Yet had the humber of her days
Been as complete as was her praise,
Nature and Fate had had no strife
In giving limit to her life.

Her high birth, and her graces sweet, Quickly found a lover meet; The virgin quire for her request The god that sits at marriage feast; He at their invoking came, But with a scarce well-lighted flame;

AN EPITAPH

And in his garland, as he stood, Ye might discern a cypress bud. Once had the early matrons run To greet her of a lovely son, And now with second hope she goes, And calls Lucina to her throes; But, whether by mischance or blame, Atropos for Lucina came, And with remorseless cruelty Spoil'd at once both fruit and tree: The hapless babe, before his birth, Had burial, yet not laid in earth; And the languish'd mother's womb Was not long a living tomb.

So have I seen some tender slip, Sav'd with care from winter's nip, The pride of her carnation train, Pluck'd up by some unheedy swain, Who only thought to crop the flower New shot up from vernal shower; But the fair blossom hangs the head Side-ways, as on a dying bed, And those pearls of dew, she wears, Prove to be presaging tears, Which the sad morn had let fall On her hastening funeral.

Gentle Lady, may thy grave Peace and quiet ever have; After this thy travel sore Sweet rest seize thee evermore,

AN EPITAPH

That, to give the world encrease,
Shorten'd hast thy own life's lease.
Here, besides the sorrowing
That thy noble house doth bring,
Here be tears of perfect moan
Wept for thee in Helicon;
And some flowers, and some bays,
For thy herse, to strew the ways,
Sent thee from the banks of Came,
Devoted to thy virtuous name;
Whilst thou, bright Saint, high sitst in
glory,

Next her, much like to thee in story,
That fair Syrian shepherdess,
Who, after years of barrenness,
The highly-favour'd Joseph bore
To him that serv'd for her before,
And at her next birth, much like thee,
Through pangs fled to felicity,
Far within the bosom bright
Of blazing Majesty and Light:
There with thee, new welcome Saint,
Like fortunes may her soul acquaint,
With thee there clad in radiant sheen,
No Marchioness, but now a Queen.

L'Allegro

Hence, loathed Melancholy, Of Cerberus and blackest Midnight born, In Stygian cave forlorn,

'Mongst horrid shapes, and shrieks, and sights unholy!

Find out some uncouth cell,

Where brooding Darkness spreads his jealous wings,

And the night-raven sings;

There under ebon shades, and low-brow'd rocks.

As ragged as thy locks,

In dark Cimmerian desart ever dwell. But come, thou goddess fair and free

In Heaven yelep'd Euphrosyne,

And by Men heart-easing Mirth;

Whom lovely Venus, at a birth,

With two sister Graces more,

To ivy-crowned Bacchus bore:

Or whether (as some sager sing)

The frolick wind that breathes the spring,

Zephyr, with Aurora playing,

As he met her once a-Maying;

There on beds of violets blue, And fresh-blown roses wash'd in dew, Fill'd her with thee a daughter fair, So buxom, blithe, and debonair.

Haste thee, Nymph, and bring with thee Jest, and youthful Jollity, Quips, and Cranks, and wanton Wiles. Nods, and Becks, and wreathed Smiles, Such as hang on Hebe's cheek, And love to live in dimple sleek; Sport that wrinkled Care derides. And Laughter holding both his sides. Come, and trip it as ve go On the light fantastick toe: And in thy right hand lead with thee The mountain-nymph, sweet Liberty: And, if I give thee honour due, Mirth, admit me of thy crew, To live with her, and live with thee, In unreproved pleasures free; To hear the lark begin his flight, And singing startle the dull night. From his watch-tower in the skies. Till the dappled dawn doth rise; Then to come, in spite of sorrow, And at my window bid good-morrow, Through the sweet-briar, or the vine, Or the twisted eglantine: While the cock, with lively din, Scatters the rear of Darkness thin;

And to the stack, or the barn-door,
Stoutly struts his dames before:
Oft listening how the hounds and
horn

Cheerly rouse the slumbering morn, From the side of some hoar hill. Through the high wood echoing shrill: Sometime walking, not unseen, By hedge-row elms, on hillocks green, Right against the eastern gate, Where the great sun begins his state, Robed in flames, and amber light, The clouds in thousand liveries dight; While the plowman, near at hand, Whistles o'er the furrow'd land. And the milkmaid singeth blithe, And the mower whets his sithe, And every shepherd tells his tale Under the hawthorn in the dale. Straight mine eye hath caught new pleasures,

Whilst the landskip round it measures; Russet lawns, and fallows gray, Where the nibbling flocks do stray; Mountains, on whose barren breast The labouring clouds do often rest; Meadows trim with daisies pied, Shallow brooks, and rivers wide: Towers and battlements it sees Bosom'd high in tufted trees,

Where perhaps some Beauty lies, The Cynosure of neighbouring eyes. Hard by, a cottage chimney smoaks. From betwixt two aged oaks, Where Corvdon and Thyrsis, met, Are at their savoury dinner set Of herbs, and other country messes, Which the neat-handed Phillis dresses: And then in haste the bower she leaves. With Thestylis to bind the sheaves: Or, if the earlier season lead, To the tann'd havcock in the mead. Sometimes with secure delight The upland hamlets will invite, When the merry bells ring round, And the jocund rebecks sound To many a youth, and many a maid, Dancing in the chequer'd shade; And young and old come forth to play On a sun-shine holy-day, Till the live-long day-light fail: Then to the spicy nut-brown ale, With stories told of many a feat, How faery Mab the junkets eat; She was pinch'd, and pull'd, she sed; And he, by friars' lantern led, Tells how the drudging Goblin swet, To earn his cream-bowl duly set, When in one night, ere glimpse of morn, His shadowy flail hath thresh'd the corn,

That ten days labourers could not end: Then lies him down the lubbar fiend, And, stretch'd out all the chimney's length, Basks at the fire his hairy strength; And crop-full out of doors he flings, Ere the first cock his matin rings. Thus done the tales, to bed they creep, By whispering winds soon lull'd asleep. Towred cities please us then, And the busy hum of men. Where throngs of knights and barons bold, In weeds of peace, high triumphs hold, With store of ladies, whose bright eves Rain influence, and judge the prize Of wit, or arms, while both contend To win her grace, whom all commend. There let Hymen oft appear In saffron robe, with taper clear, And pomp, and feast, and revelry, With masque, and antique pageantry; Such sights as youthful poets dream On summer eyes by haunted stream. Then to the well-trod stage anon, If Jonson's learned sock be on, Or sweetest Shakspeare, Fancy's child, Warble his native wood-notes wild.

And ever, against eating cares, Lap me in soft Lydian airs, Married to immortal verse; Such as the meeting soul may pierce,

In notes, with many a winding bout Of linked sweetness long drawn out, With wanton heed and giddy cunning; The melting voice through mazes running, Untwisting all the chains that tie The hidden soul of harmony; That Orpheus' self may heave his head From golden slumber on a bed Of heap'd Elysian flowers, and hear Such strains as would have won the eat Of Pluto, to have quite set free His half-regain'd Eurydice.

These delights if thou canst give, Mirth, with thee I mean to live.

Il Penseroso

Hence, vain deluding Joys,

The brood of Folly without father bred! How little you bested.

Or fill the fixed mind with all your toys! Dwell in some idle brain,

And fancies fond with gaudy shapes possess,

As thick and numberless

As the gay motes that people the sunbeams;

Or likest hovering dreams,
The fickle pensioners of Morpheus' train.
But hail, thou goddess, sage and holy,
Hail, divinest Melancholy!
Whose saintly visage is too bright
To hit the sense of human sight,
And therefore to our weaker view
O'erlaid with black, staid Wisdom's hue;
Black, but such as in esteem
Prince Memnon's sister might beseem,
Or that starr'd Ethiop queen that strove
To set her beauty's praise above

The Sea-Nymphs, and their powers offended: Yet thou art higher far descended: Thee bright-hair'd Vesta, long of vore, To solitary Saturn bore: His daughter she; in Saturn's reign, Such mixture was not held a stain: Oft in glimmering bowers and glades He met her, and in secret shades Of woody Ida's inmost grove, Whilst yet there was no fear of Jove. Come, pensive Nun, devout and pure, Sober, stedfast, and demure, All in a robe of darkest grain. Flowing with majestick train, And sable stole of cypress lawn, Over thy decent shoulders drawn. Come, but keep thy wonted state, With even step, and musing gait; And looks commércing with the skies, Thy rapt soul sitting in thine eyes: There, held in holy passion still, Forget thyself to marble, till With a sad leaden downward cast Thou fix them on the earth as fast: And join with thee calm Peace, and Quiet, Spare Fast, that oft with gods doth diet, And hears the Muses in a ring Ave round about Jove's altar sing: And add to these retired Leisure, That in trim gardens takes his pleasure:

But first and chiefest with thee bring, Him that you soars on golden wing, Guiding the fiery-wheeled throne, The Cherub Contemplation: And the mute Silence hist along, 'Less Philomel will deign a song, In her sweetest saddest plight, Smoothing the rugged brow of night, While Cynthia checks her dragon yoke, Gently o'er the accustom'd oak: Sweet bird, that shunn'st the noise of folly, Most musical, most melancholy! Thee, chauntress, oft the woods among, I woo, to hear thy even-song; And, missing thee, I walk unseen On the dry smooth-shaven green, To behold the wandering moon, Riding near her highest noon, Like one that had been led astray Through the heaven's wide pathless way; And oft, as if her head she bow'd, Stooping through a fleecy cloud. Oft, on a plat of rising ground, I hear the far-off Curfeu sound, Over some wide-water'd shore, Swinging slow with sullen roar: Or, if the air will not permit, Some still removed place will fit, Where glowing embers through the room Teach light to counterfeit a gloom;

Far from all resort of mirth. Save the cricket on the hearth, Or the bellman's drowsy charm, To bless the doors from nightly harm. Or let my lamp at midnight hour, Be seen in some high lonely tower, Where I may oft out-watch the Bear, With thrice-great Hermes, or unsphere The spirit of Plato, to unfold What worlds or what vast regions hold The immortal mind, that hath forsook Her mansion in this fleshly nook: And of those demons that are found In fire, air, flood, or under ground, Whose power hath a true consent With planet, or with element. Sometime let gorgeous Tragedy In sceptr'd pall come sweeping by, Presenting Thebes, or Pelops' line, Or the tale of Troy divine, Or what (though rare) of later age Ennobled hath the buskin'd stage.

But, O sad Virgin, that thy power Might raise Musæus from his bower! Or bid the soul of Orpheus sing Such notes, as, warbled to the string, Drew iron tears down Pluto's cheek, And made Hell grant what love did seek! Or call up him that left half-told The story of Cambuscan bold,

Of Camball, and of Algarsife,
And who had Canace to wife,
That own'd the virtuous ring and glass;
And of the wondrous horse of brass
On which the Tartar king did ride;
And if aught else great bards beside
In sage and solemn tunes have sung,
Of turneys, and of trophies hung,
Of forests, and enchantments drear,
Where more is meant than meets the ear.
Thus, Night, oft see me in thy pale

Thus, Night, oft see me in thy pale career,

Till civil-suited Morn appear, Not trick'd and frounc'd, as she was wont With the Attick boy to hunt, But kercheft in a comely cloud, While rocking winds are piping loud, Or usher'd with a shower still. When the gust hath blown his fill, Ending on the rustling leaves, With minute drops from off the eaves. And when the sun begins to fling His flaring beams, me, goddess, bring To arched walks of twilight groves, And shadows brown that Sylvan loves, Of pine, or monumental oak, Where the rude axe, with heaved stroke, Was never heard the Nymphs to daunt, Or fright them from their hallow'd haunt.

There in close covert by some brook, Where no profaner eve may look, Hide me from day's garish eye, While the bee with honied thigh, That at her flowery work doth sing, And the waters murmuring, With such consort as they keep, Entice the dewy-feather'd Sleep; And let some strange mysterious Dream Wave at his wings in aery stream Of lively portraiture display'd, Softly on my eye-lids laid. And, as I wake, sweet musick breathe Above, about, or underneath, Sent by some Spirit to mortals good, Or the unseen Genius of the wood.

But let my due feet never fail
To walk the studious cloysters pale,
And love the high-embowed roof,
With antick pillars massy proof,
And storied windows richly dight,
Casting a dim religious light:
There let the pealing organ blow,
To the full-voic'd quire below,
In service high, and anthems clear,
As may with sweetness, through mine ear,
Dissolve me into ecstasies,
And bring all heaven before mine eyes.

And may at last my weary age Find out the peaceful hermitage,

The hairy gown and mossy cell, Where I may sit and rightly spell Of every star that heaven doth shew, And every herb that sips the dew; Till old experience do attain To something like prophetick strain.

These pleasures, Melancholy, give, And I with thee will choose to live.

F

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Part of an Entertainment presented to the Countess Dowager of Derby at Harefield, by some Noble Persons of her Family; who appear on the Scene in pastoral habit, moving toward the seat of state, with this Song:

I. SONG

Look, Nymphs and Shepherds, look, What sudden blaze of majesty Is that which we from hence descry, Too divine to be mistook:

This, this is she
To whom our vows and wishes bend;
Here our solemn search hath end.
Fame, that, her high worth to raise,
Seem'd erst so lavish and profuse,
We may justly now accuse
Of detraction from her praise:
Less than half we find exprest,

Mark, what radiant state she spreads, In circle round her shining throne,

Envy bid conceal the rest.

Shooting her beams like silver threads;
This, this is she alone,
Sitting like a goddess bright,
In the center of her light.
Might she the wise Latona be,
Or the towred Cybele
Mother of a hundred gods?
Juno dares not give her odds;
Who had thought this clime had held
A deity so unparallel'd?

As they come forward, the Genius of the Wood appears, and, turning toward them, speaks.

Gen. Stay, gentle Swains; for, though in this disguise,

I see bright honour sparkle through your eyes:

Of famous Arcady ye are, and sprung
Of that renowned flood, so often sung,
Divine Alphéus, who by secret sluice
Stole under seas to meet his Arethuse;
And ye, the breathing roses of the wood,
Fair silver-buskin'd Nymphs, as great
and good;

I know, this quest of yours, and free intent, Was all in honour and devotion meant To the great mistress of yon princely shrine,

Whom with low reverence I adore as mine;

And, with all helpful service, will comply To further this night's glad solemnity;

And lead ye, where ye may more near behold

What shallow-searching Fame hath left untold;

Which I full oft, amidst these shades alone, Have sat to wonder at, and gaze upon:

For know, by lot from Jove I am the Power

Of this fair wood, and live in oaken bower, To nurse the saplings tall, and curl the grove

With ringlets quaint, and wanton windings wove.

And all my plants I save from nightly ill.
Of noisome winds, and blasting vapours chill:

And from the boughs brush off the evil dew.

And heal the harms of thwarting thunder blue,

Or what the cross dire-looking planet smites,

Or hurtful worm with canker'd venom bites.

When evening gray doth rise, I fetch my round

Over the mount, and all this hallow'd ground;

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And early, ere the odorous breath of morn Awakes the slumbering leaves, or tassell'd horn

Shakes the high thicket, haste I all about, Number my ranks, and visit every sprout With puissant words, and murmurs made to bless.

But else in deep of night, when drowsiness Hath lock'd up mortal sense, then listen I To the celestial Syrens' harmony,

That sit upon the nine infolded spheres, And sing to those that hold the vital shears, And turn the adamantine spindle round, On which the fate of gods and men is

wound.

Such sweet compulsion doth in musick lie, To lull the daughters of Necessity, And keep unsteady Nature to her law, And the low world in measur'd motion

draw

After the heavenly tune, which none can hear

Of human mould, with gross unpurged ear; And yet such musick worthiest were to blaze

The peerless highth of her immortal praise, Whose lustre leads us, and for her most fit, If my inferior hand or voice could hit Inimitable sounds. Yet, as we go, Whate'er the skill of lesser gods can show,

I will assay, her worth to celebrate, And so attend ye toward her glittering state;

Where ye may all, that are of noble stem, Approach, and kiss her sacred vesture's hem.

II. SONG

O'er the smooth enamell'd green,
Where no print of step hath been,
Follow me, as I sing
And touch the warbled string.
Under the shady roof
Of branching elm star-proof,
Follow me;
I will bring you where she sits,
Clad in splendour as befits
Her deity.

Such a rural Queen
All Arcadia hath not seen.

III. SONG

Nymphs and Shepherds, dance no more By sandy Ladon's lilied banks; On old Lycæus, or Cyllene hoar, Trip no more in twilight ranks; Though Erymanth your loss deplore, A better soil shall give ye thanks. From the stony Mænalus Bring your flocks, and live with us;

Here ye shall have greater grace,
To serve the Lady of this place.
Though Syrinx your Pan's mistress were,
Yet Syrinx well might wait on her.
Such a rural Queen
All Arcadia hath not seen.

Comus

A MASK PRESENTED AT LUDLOW CASTLE, 1634 BEFORE JOHN, EARL OF BRIDGEWATER, THEN PRESIDENT OF WALES



To the Right Honourable John Lord Viscount Bracly, son and heir apparent to the Earl of Bridgewater, etc.

My LORD,

This poem, which received its first occasion of birth from yourself and others of your noble family, and much honour from your own person in the performance, now returns again to make a finall dedication of itself to you. Although not openly acknowledged by the author, yet it is a legitimate off-spring, so lovely, and so much desired, that the often copying of it hath tired my pen to give my severall friends satisfaction, and brought me to a necessity of producing it to the publike view; and now to offer it up in all rightfull devotion to those fair hopes, and rare endowments of your much promising youth, which give a full

assurance, to all that know you, of a future excellence. Live, sweet Lord, to be the honour of your name, and receive this as your own, from the hands of him, who hath by many favours been long obliged to your most honoured parents, and, as in this representation your attendant *Thyrsis*, so now in all reall expression

Your faithfull and most humble Servant, H. LAWES.

The Copy of a Letter written by Sir Henry Wootton, to the Author, upon the following Poem.

From the Colledge, this 13. of April, 1638. Sir,

It was a special favour, when you lately bestowed upon me here the first taste of your acquaintance, though no longer than to make me know that I wanted more time to value it, and to enjoy it rightly; and in truth, if I could then have imagined your farther stay in these parts, which I understood afterwards by Mr. H., I would have been bold, in our vulgar phrase, to mend my draught (for you left me with an extreme thirst) and to have begged your conversation again, joyntly with your said learned friend, at a poor meal or two, that we might have banded together som good authors of the ancient time: among which I observed you to have been familiar.

Since your going, you have charged me with new obligations, both for a very kinde letter from you dated the 6th of this month, and for a dainty peece of entertainment which came therwith. Wherin I should much commend the Tragical part, if the Lyrical did not ravish me with a certain Dorigue delicacy in your songs and odes; wherunto I must plainly confess to have seen yet nothing parallel in our language: Ipsa mollities. But I must not omit to tell you, that I now onely owe you thanks for intimating unto me (how modestly soever) the true artificer. For the work itself I had viewed som good while before with singular delight: having received it from our common friend Mr. R., in the very close of the late R.'s Poems, printed at Oxford, whereunto it is added (as I now suppose) that the accessory might help out the principal, according to the art of stationers, and to leave the reader Con la bocca dolce.

Now, Sir, concerning your travels wherin I may chalenge a little more priviledge of discours with you; I suppose you will not blanch Paris in your way; therefore I have been bold to trouble you with a few lines to Mr. M. B., whom you shall easily find attending the young Lord S., as his governour; and you may surely receive from him good directions for the shaping of your farther journey into Italy, where he did reside by my choice som time for the king, after mine own recess from Venice.

I should think that your best line would be thorow the whole length of France to Marseilles, and thence by sea to Genoa, whence the passage into Tuscany is as diurnal as a Gravesend barge: I hasten, as you do, to Florence, or Siena, the rather to tell you a short story from the interest you have given

me in your safety.

At Siena I was tabled in the house of one Alberto Scipioni, an old Roman courtier in dangerous times, having bin steward to the Duca di Pagliano, who with all his family were strangled, save this onely man that escaped by foresight of the tempest: with him I had often much chat of those affairs; into which he took pleasure to look back from his native harbour; and at my departure toward Rome (which had been the center of his experience) I had wonn confidence enough to beg his advice, how I might carry myself securely there, without offence of others, or of mine own conscience. Signor Arrigo mio, (sayes he), I pensieri stretti ed il viso sciolto will go safely over the whole world: Of which Delphian oracle (for so I have found it) your judgement doth need no commentary; and therefore (Sir) I will commit you with it to the best of all securities, God's dear love, remaining

> Your Friend as much at command as any of longer date

> > HENRY WOOTTON.

Postscript

Sir,—I have expressly sent this my foot-boy to prevent your departure without some acknowledgement from me of the receipt of your obliging Letter, having myself through som busines, I know not how, neglected the ordinary conveyance. In any part where I shall understand you fixed, I shall be glad, and diligent, to entertain you with home-novelties; even for some fomentation of our friendship, too soon interrupted in the cradle.

THE PERSONS

THE ATTENDANT SPIRIT, afterwards in the habit of Thyrsis.
COMUS, with his Crew.
THE LADY.
FIRST BROTHER.
SECOND BROTHER.
SABRINA, the Nymph.

The Chief Persons who presented were:-

The Lord Brackley; Mr. Thomas Egerton, his Brother; The Lady Alice Egerton.

THE MASK

The first Scene discovers a wild wood

The ATTENDANT SPIRIT descends or enters

Before the starry threshold of Jove's court My mansion is, where those immortal shapes

Of bright aëreal spirits live inspher'd In regions mild of calm and serene air, Above the smoke and stir of this dim spot, Which men call Earth; and, with lowthoughted care,

Confin'd and pester'd in this pinfold here, Strive to keep up a frail and feverish being, Unmindful of the crown that Virtue gives, After this mortal change, to her true servants,

Amongst the enthron'd gods on sainted seats.

Yet some there be, that by due steps aspire To lay their just hands on that golden key That opes the palace of Eternity:

To such my errand is; and, but for such, I would not soil these pure ambrosial weeds

With the rank vapours of this sin-worn mould.

But to my task. Neptune, besides the sway

Of every salt flood, and each ebbing stream, Took in by lot 'twixt high and nether Jove Imperial rule of all the sea-girt isles, That like to rich and various gems inlay The unadorned bosom of the deep: Which he, to grace his tributary gods, By course commits to several government, And gives them leave to wear their sapphire crowns,

And wield their little tridents: But this Isle.

The greatest and the best of all the main, He quarters to his blue-hair'd deities; And all this tract that fronts the falling sun

A noble Peer of mickle trust and power Has in his charge, with temper'd awe to guide

An old and haughty nation, proud in arms: Where his fair off-spring, nursed in princely lore,

Are coming to attend their father's state, And new-entrusted sceptre; but their way Lies through the perplex'd paths of this drear wood,

The nodding horrour of whose shady brows Threats the forlorn and wandering passenger;

And here their tender age might suffer peril,

But that by quick command from sovran

I was dispatch'd for their defence and guard:

And listen why; for I will tell you now What never yet was heard in tale or song, From old or modern bard, in hall or bower.

Bacchus, that first from out the purple grape

Crush'd the sweet poison of misused wine, After the Tuscan mariners transform'd,

Coasting the Tyrrhene shore, as the winds listed,

On Circe's island fell: (Who knows not Circe,

The daughter of the Sun, whose charmed cup

Whoever tasted lost his upright shape,

And downward fell into a grovelling swine?)

This Nymph, that gaz'd upon his clustering locks

With ivy berries wreath'd, and his blithe youth,

Had by him, ere he parted thence, a son Much like his father, but his mother more, Whom therefore she brought up, and

Comus nam'd:

Who, ripe and frolick of his full-grown age.

Roving the Celtick and Iberian fields. At last betakes him to this ominous wood; And, in thick shelter of black shades imbower'd.

Excels his mother at her mighty art, Offering to every weary traveller His orient liquor in a crystal glass, To quench the drouth of Phœbus; which as they taste,

(For most do taste through fond intemperate thirst.)

Soon as the potion works, their human countenance.

The express resemblance of the gods, is chang'd

Into some brutish form of wolf, or bear; Or ounce, or tiger, hog, or bearded goat, All other parts remaining as they were; And they, so perfect is their misery, Not once perceive their foul disfigurement,

But boast themselves more comely than before:

And all their friends and native home forget,

To roll with pleasure in a sensual stye. Therefore when any, favour'd of high Jove, Chances to pass through this adventurous glade, G

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Swift as the sparkle of a glancing star I shoot from heaven, to give him safe convoy,

As now I do: But first I must put off
These my sky-robes spun out of Iris'
woof

And take the weeds and likeness of a

That to the service of this house belongs, Who with his soft pipe, and smooth-dittied song,

Well knows to still the wild winds when they roar,

And hush the waving woods; nor of less faith,

And in this office of his mountain watch Likeliest, and nearest to the present aid Of this occasion. But I hear the tread Of hateful steps: I must be viewless now.

Comus enters, with a charming rod in one hand, his glass in the other; with him a rout of monsters, headed like sundry sorts of wild beasts, but otherwise like men and women, their apparel glistering. They come in making a riotous and unruly noise, with torches in their hands.

Comus. The star, that bids the shepherd fold,

Now the top of heaven doth hold;

And the gilded car of day His glowing axle doth allay In the steep Atlantick stream: And the slope sun his upward beam Shoots against the dusky pole, Pacing toward the other goal Of his chamber in the East. Meanwhile, welcome Joy and Feast, Midnight Shout and Revelry, Tipsy Dance and Jollity. Braid your locks with rosy twine, Dropping odours, dropping wine. Rigour now is gone to bed, And Advice with scrupulous head, Strict Age, and sour Severity, With their grave saws, in slumber lie. We, that are of purer fire, Imitate the starry quire, Who, in their nightly watchful spheres, Lead in swift round the months and vears.

The sounds and seas, with all their finny drove,

Now to the moon in wavering morrice move;

And, on the tawny sands and shelves,
Trip the pert faeries and the dapper elves.
By dimpled brook and fountain-brim
The Wood-Nymphs, deck'd with daisies
trim,

Their merry wakes and pastimes keep; What hath Night to do with Sleep? Night hath better sweets to prove; Venus now wakes, and wakens Love. Come, let us our rites begin; 'T is only day-light that makes sin, Which these dun shades will ne'er report.—Hail, goddess of nocturnal sport, Dark-veil'd Cotytto! to whom the secret

Of midnight torches burns; mysterious dame.

That ne'er art call'd but when the dragon woom

Of Stygian darkness spets her thickest gloom,

And makes one blot of all the air; Stay thy cloudy ebon chair,

Wherein thou rid'st with Hecat', and befriend

Us thy vow'd priests, till utmost end Of all thy dues be done, and none left out,

Ere the blabbing eastern scout,
The nice Morn on the Indian steep
From her cabin'd loop-hole peep,
And to the tell-tale Sun descry
Our conceal'd solemnity.—
Come, knit hands, and beat the ground,
In a light fantastick round.

The Measure

Break off, break off, I feel the different pace

Of some chaste footing near about this ground.

Run to your shrouds, within these brakes and trees;

Our number may affright: Some virgin

(For so I can distinguish by mine art) Benighted in these woods. Now to my charms,

And to my wily trains; I shall ere long Be well-stock'd with as fair a herd as graz'd

About my mother Circe. Thus I hurl My dazzling spells into the spungy air, Of power to cheat the eye with blear illusion.

And give it false presentments, lest the place

And my quaint habits breed astonishment, And put the damsel to suspicious flight; Which must not be, for that's against my course:

I, under fair pretence of friendly ends, And well-plac'd words of glozing courtesy Baited with reasons not unplausible, Wind me into the easy-hearted man,

And hug him into snares. When once her eve

Hath met the virtue of this magick dust I shall appear some harmless villager,

Whom thrift keeps up about his country gear.

But here she comes; I fairly step aside, And hearken, if I may, her business here.

The LADY enters

This way the noise was, if mine ear be true, My best guide now: Methought it was the sound

Of riot and ill-manag'd merriment,

Such as the jocund flute, or gamesome pipe,

Stirs up among the loose unletter'd hinds; When for their teeming flocks, and granges full.

In wanton dance they praise the bounteous Pan,

And thank the gods amiss. I should be loth

To meet the rudeness, and swill'd insolence, Of such late wassailers; yet O! where else Shall I inform my unacquainted feet

In the blind mazes of this tangled wood? My Brothers, when they saw me wearied

With this long way, resolving here to lodge Under the spreading favour of these pines, Stept, as they said, to the next thicketside

To bring me berries, or such cooling fruit As the kind hospitable woods provide.

They left me then, when the gray-hooded Even,

Like a sad votarist in palmer's weed, Rose from the hindmost wheels of Phœbus' wain.

But where they are, and why they came not back,

Is now the labour of my thoughts; 'tis likeliest

They had engag'd their wandering steps too far;

And envious darkness, ere they could return,

Had stole them from me: else, O thievish Night,

Why should'st thou, but for some felonious end,

In thy dark lantern thus close up the stars, That Nature hung in Heaven, and fill'd their lamps

With everlasting oil, to give due light To the misled and lonely traveller?

This is the place, as well as I may guess, Whence even now the tumult of loud mirth

Was rife, and perfect in my listening ear; Yet nought but single darkness do I find. What might this be? A thousand fantasies Begin to throng into my memory,

Of calling shapes, and beckoning shadows dire,

And aery tongues that syllable men's names On sands, and shores, and desart wildernesses.

These thoughts may startle well, but not astound

The virtuous mind, that ever walks attended

By a strong siding champion, Conscience.— O welcome, pure-ey'd Faith; white-handed Hope,

Thou hovering Angel girt with golden wings;

And thou, unblemish'd form of Chastity! I see ye visibly, and now believe

That He, the Supreme Good, to whom all things ill

Are but as slavish officers of vengeance, Would send a glistering guardian, if need were,

To keep my life and honour unassail'd Was I deceiv'd, or did a sable cloud Turn forth her silver lining on the night? I did not err, there does a sable cloud Turn forth her silver lining on the night,

And casts a gleam over this tufted grove:
I cannot halloo to my Brothers, but
Such noise as I can make to be heard
farthest

I'll venture; for my new-enliven'd spirits Prompt me; and they perhaps are not far off.

Song

Sweet Echo, sweetest Nymph, that liv'st unseen

Within thy aery shell,
By slow Meander's margent green,
And in the violet-embroider'd vale,
Where the love-lorn nightingale

Nightly to thee her sad song mourneth well;

Canst thou not tell me of a gentle pair
That likest thy Narcissus are?
O, if thou have

Hid them in some flowery cave, Tell me but where,

Sweet queen of parley, daughter of the sphere!

So may'st thou be translated to the skies,

And give resounding grace to all Heaven's harmonies

Enter Comus

Com. Can any mortal mixture of earth's mould

Breathe such divine enchanting ravishment?

Sure something holy lodges in that breast, And with these raptures moves the vocal air

To testify his hidden residence.

How sweetly did they float upon the wings Of silence, through the empty-vaulted night,

At every fall smoothing the raven-down Of darkness, till it smil'd! I have oft heard

My mother Circe with the Syrens three, Amidst the flowery-kirtled Naiades,

Culling their potent herbs and baleful drugs;

Who, as they sung, would take the prison'd soul,

And lap it in Elysium: Scylla wept, And chid her barking waves into attention, And fell Charybdis murmur'd soft applause:

Yet they in pleasing slumber lull'd the sense,

And in sweet madness robb'd it of itself; But such a sacred and home-felt delight, Such sober certainty of waking bliss,

I never heard till now.—I'll speak to her,

And she shall be my queen.—Hail, foreign wonder!

Whom certain these rough shades did never breed,

Unless the goddess that in rural shrine Dwell'st here with Pan, or Sylvan; by blest song

Forbidding every bleak unkindly fog
To touch the prosperous growth of this
tall wood.

Lad. Nay, gentle shepherd, ill is lost that praise,

That is address'd to unattending ears; Not any boast of skill, but extreme shift How to regain my sever'd company,

Compell'd me to awake the courteous Echo

To give me answer from her mossy couch. Com. What chance, good Lady, hath bereft you thus?

Lad. Dim darkness, and this leafy labyrinth.

Com. Could that divide you from near-ushering guides?

Lad. They left me weary on a grassy turf.

Com. By falsehood, or discourtesy, or why?

Lad. To seek i' the valley some cool friendly spring.

Com. And left your fair side all unguarded, Lady?

Lad. They were but twain, and purpos'd quick return.

Com. Perhaps forestalling night pre-

Lad. How easy my misfortune is to hit!

Com. Imports their loss, beside the present need?

Lad. No less than if I should my Brothers lose.

Com. Were they of manly prime, or youthful bloom?

Lad. As smooth as Hebe's their unrazor'd lips.

Com. Two such I saw, what time the labour'd ox

In his loose traces from the furrow came,
And the swink'd hedger at his supper sat;
I saw them under a green mantling vine,
That crawls along the side of yon small
hill,

Plucking ripe clusters from the tender shoots;

Their port was more than human, as they stood:

I took it for a faery vision

Of some gay creatures of the element,

That in the colours of the rainbow live, And play i' the plighted clouds. I was awe-strook,

And, as I past, I worshipt; if those you seek,

It were a journey like the path to Heaven, To help you find them.

Lad. Gentle Villager,

What readiest way would bring me to that place?

Com. Due west it rises from this shrubby point.

Lad. To find out that, good Shepherd, I suppose,

In such a scant allowance of star-light, Would overtask the best land-pilot's art, Without the sure guess of well-practis'd

Com. I know each lane, and every alley green,

Dingle, or bushy dell of this wild wood, And every bosky bourn from side to side, My daily walks and ancient neighbourhood:

And if your stray attendance be yet lodg'd, Or shroud within these limits, I shall know

Ere morrow wake, or the low-roosted lark From her thatch'd pallet rouse; if otherwise,

I can conduct you, Lady, to a low But loyal cottage, where you may be safe Till further quest.

Lad. Shepherd, I take thy word, And trust thy honest offer'd courtesy, Which oft is sooner found in lowly sheds With smoky rafters, than in tap'stry halls In courts of princes, where it first was nam'd.

And yet is most pretended: In a place
Less warranted than this, or less secure,
I cannot be, that I should fear to change
it.—

Eye me, blest Providence, and square my trial

To my proportion'd strength!—Shepherd, lead on. [Exeunt.

Enter the Two Brothers

El. Br. Unmuffle, ye faint stars; and thou, fair moon,

That wont'st to love the traveller's benison,

Stoop thy pale visage through an amber cloud,

And disinherit Chaos, that reigns here
In double night of darkness and of
shades;

Or, if your influence be quite damm'd up

With black usurping mists, some gentle taper,

Though a rush-candle from the wicker hole

Of some clay habitation, visit us

With thy long-levell'd rule of streaming light;

And thou shalt be our star of Arcady,

Or Tyrian Cynosure.

Sec. Br. Or, if our eyes

Be barr'd that happiness, might we but hear

The folded flocks penn'd in their wattled cotes,

Or sound of pastoral reed with oaten stops,

Or whistle from the lodge, or village cock Count the night watches to his feathery dames,

'T would be some solace yet, some little cheering,

In this close dungeon of innumerous boughs.

But, O that hapless virgin, our lost Sister! Where may she wander now, whither betake her

From the chill dew, amongst rude burs and thistles?

Perhaps some cold bank is her bolster now,

Or 'gainst the rugged bark of some broad elm

Leans her unpillow'd head, fraught with sad fears.

What if in wild amazement and affright? Or, while we speak, within the direful grasp

Of savage hunger, or of savage heat? El. Br. Peace, Brother; be not overexquisite

To cast the fashion of uncertain evils:
For grant they be so, while they rest
unknown.

What need a man forestall his date of grief.

And run to meet what he would most

Or if they be but false alarms of fear, How bitter is such self-delusion! I do not think my Sister so to seek,

Or so unprincipled in Virtue's book,

And the sweet peace that goodness bosoms ever,

As that the single want of light and noise (Not being in danger, as I trust she is not,)

Could stir the constant mood of her calm thoughts,

And put them into misbecoming plight. Virtue could see to do what Virtue would

By her own radiant light, though sun and moon

Were in the flat sea sunk. And Wisdom's self

Oft seeks to sweet retired solitude;

Where, with her best nurse, Contemplation,

She plumes her feathers, and lets grow her wings,

That in the various bustle of resort

Were all-to ruffled, and sometimes impair'd.

He that has light within his own clear breast.

May sit i' the center, and enjoy bright day:

But he that hides a dark soul and foul thoughts,

Benighted walks under the mid-day sun; Himself is his own dungeon.

Sec. Br. 199 ? May 1 1 1 T is most true,

That musing Meditation most affects

The pensive secrecy of desart cell,

Far from the cheerful haunt of men and herds,

And sits as safe as in a senate-house;

For who would rob a hermit of his weeds, His few books, or his beads, or maple dish.

Or do his gray hairs any violence?
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H

But Beauty, like the fair Hesperian tree Laden with blooming gold, had need the guard

Of dragon-watch with unenchanted eye, To save her blossoms, and defend her fruit,

From the rash hand of bold Incontinence. You may as well spread out the unsunn'd heaps

Of miser's treasure by an outlaw's den,
And tell me it is safe, as bid me hope
Danger will wink on opportunity,
And let a single helpless maiden pass
Uninjur'd in this wild surrounding waste.
Of night, or loneliness, it recks me not;
I fear the dread events that dog them both,
Lest some ill-greeting touch attempt the
person

Of our unowned Sister.

El. Br. I do not, Brother, Infer, as if I thought my Sister's state Secure, without all doubt or controversy; Yet, where an equal poise of hope and fear

Does arbitrate the event, my nature is That I incline to hope, rather than fear, And gladly banish squint suspicion. My Sister is not so defenceless left As you imagine; she has a hidden strength, Which you remember not.

Sec. Br. What hidden strength, Unless the strength of Heaven, if you mean that?

El. Br. I mean that too, but yet a hidden strength,

Which, if Heaven gave it, may be term'd her own:

'Tis Chastity, my Brother, Chastity:

She that has that is clad in complete steel;

And, like a quiver'd Nymph with arrows keen,

May trace huge forests, and unharbour'd heaths.

Infamous hills, and sandy perilous wilds; Where, through the sacred rays of Chastity,

No savage fierce, bandite, or mountaineer, Will dare to soil her virgin purity:

Yea there, where very Desolation dwells, By grots and caverns shagg'd with horrid shades,

She may pass on with unblench'd majesty, Be it not done in pride, or in presumption.

Some say, no evil thing that walks by night

In fog or fire, by lake or moorish fen, Blue meager hag, or stubborn unlaid ghost

That breaks his magick chains at Curfeu time

No goblin, or swart faery of the mine, Hath hurtful power o'er true Virginity. Do ye believe me yet, or shall I call Antiquity from the old schools of Greece To testify the arms of Chastity? Hence had the huntress Dian her dread

Fair silver-shafted queen, for ever chaste, Wherewith she tam'd the brinded lioness And spotted mountain-pard, but set at nought

The frivolous bolt of Cupid; gods and men Fear'd her stern frown, and she was queen o' the woods.

What was that snaky-headed Gorgon shield.

That wise Minerva wore, unconquer'd virgin,

Wherewith she freez'd her foes to congeal'd stone,

But rigid looks of chaste austerity, And noble grace, that dash'd brute violence With sudden adoration and blank awe? So dear to Heaven is saintly Chastity, That when a soul is found sincerely so, A thousand liveried Angels lackey her, Driving far off each thing of sin and guilt, And, in clear dream and solemn vision,

Tell her of things that no gross ear can hear:

Till oft converse with heavenly habitants Begin to cast a beam on the outward shape,

The unpolluted temple of the mind,

And turns it by degrees to the soul's essence,

Till all be made immortal: But when Lust,

By unchaste looks, loose gestures, and foul talk,

But most by lewd and lavish act of sin, Lets in defilement to the inward parts, The soul grows clotted by contagion, Imbodies, and imbrutes, till she quite lose The divine property of her first being. Such are those thick and gloomy shadows damp,

Oft seen in charnel vaults and sepulchres Lingering, and sitting by a new made grave,

As loth to leave the body that it lov'd, And link'd itself by carnal sensuality To a degenerate and degraded state.

Sec. Br. How charming is divine Philosophy!

Not harsh, and crabbed, as dull fools suppose,

But musical as is Apollo's lute,

And a perpetual feast of nectar'd sweets, Where no crude surfeit reigns.

F.1. Br. List, list: I hear

Some far-off halloo break the silent air. Sec. Br. Methought so too; what should

it be?

El. Br. For certain

Either some one like us night-founder'd here.

Or else some neighbour woodman, or, at worst.

Some roving robber calling to his fellows.

Sec. Br. Heaven keep my Sister! Again, again, and near!

Best draw, and stand upon our guard. El. Br. I'll halloo:

If he be friendly, he comes well; if not, Defence is a good cause, and Heaven be for us.

Enter the ATTENDANT SPIRIT, habited like a shepherd]

That halloo I should know; what are you? speak:

Come not too near, you fall on iron stakes else.

Spir. What voice is that? my young Lord? speak again.

Sec. Br. O Brother, 't is my father's shepherd, sure.

El. Br. Thyrsis? Whose artful strains have oft delay'd

The huddling brook to hear his madrigal, And sweeten'd every musk-rose of the dale.

How cam'st thou here, good swain? hath any ram

Slipt from the fold, or young kid lost his dam,

Or straggling wether the pent flock forsook?

How could'st thou find this dark sequester'd nook?

Spir. O my lov'd master's heir, and his next joy,

I came not here on such a trivial toy
As a stray'd ewe, or to pursue the stealth
Of pilfering wolf; not all the fleecy wealth
That doth enrich these downs is worth a
thought

To this my errand, and the care it brought. But, O my virgin Lady, where is she? How chance she is not in your company? El. Br. To tell thee sadly, Shepherd, without blame,

Or our neglect, we lost her as we came. Spir. Ay me unhappy! then my fears are true.

El. Br. What fears, good Thyrsis? Pr'ythee briefly shew.

Spir. I'll tell ye; 't is not vain or fabulous,

(Though so esteem'd by shallow ignorance,)

What the sage poets, taught by the heavenly Muse,

Storied of old, in high immortal verse, Of dire chimeras, and enchanted isles, And rifted rocks whose entrance leads to

And rifted rocks whose entrance leads to Hell;

For such there be; but unbelief is blind.

Within the navel of this hideous wood,

Immur'd in cypress shades, a sorcerer

dwells,

Of Bacchus and of Circe born, great Comus,

Deep skill'd in all his mother's witcheries; And here to every thirsty wanderer

By sly enticement gives his baneful cup, With many murmurs mix'd, whose pleasing poison

The visage quite transforms of him that drinks,

And the inglorious likeness of a beast Fixes instead, unmoulding reason's mintage

Character'd in the face: This have I learnt

Tending my flocks hard by i' the hilly crofts,

That brow this bottom-glade; whence night by night

He and his monstrous rout are heard to howl,

Like stabled wolves, or tigers at their prey,

Doing abhorred rites to Hecate

In their obscured haunts of inmost bowers. Yet have they many baits, and guileful

spells,

To inveigle and invite the unwary sense Of them that pass unweeting by the way. This evening late, by then the chewing flocks

Had ta'en their supper on the savoury herb

Of knot-grass dew-besprent, and were in fold,

I sat me down to watch upon a bank With ivy canopied, and interwove With flaunting honey-suckle, and began, Wrapt in a pleasing fit of melancholy, To meditate my rural minstrelsy,

Till fancy had her fill; but, ere a close, The wonted roar was up amidst the woods.

And fill'd the air with barbarous dissonance;

At which I ceas'd, and listen'd them a while,

Till an unusual stop of sudden silence

Gave respite to the drowsy frighted steeds, That draw the litter of close-curtain'd

Sleep;

At last a soft and solemn-breathing sound Rose like a steam of rich distill'd perfumes,

And stole upon the air, that even Silence Was took ere she was ware, and wish'd she might

Deny her nature, and be never more,

Still to be so displac'd. I was all ear, And took in strains that might create a

soul

Under the ribs of Death: but, O! ere long, Too well I did perceive it was the voice Of my most honour'd Lady, your dear Sister.

Amaz'd I stood, harrow'd with grief and fear,

And, O poor hapless nightingale, thought I, How sweet thou sing'st, how near the deadly snare!

Then down the lawns I ran with headlong haste,

Through paths and turnings often trod by day;

Till, guided by mine ear, I found the place,

Where that damn'd wisard, hid in sly disguise,

(For so by certain signs I knew,) had met Already, ere my best speed could prevent, The aidless innocent Lady, his wish'd prey; Who gently ask'd if he had seen such two,

Supposing him some neighbour villager. Longer I durst not stay, but soon I guess'd

Ye were the two she meant; with that I sprung

Into swift flight, till I had found you here; But further know I not.

Sec. Br. O night, and shades! How are ye join'd with Hell in triple knot Against the unarmed weakness of one virgin,

Alone, and helpless! Is this the confidence You gave me, Brother?

El. Br. Yes, and keep it still; Lean on it safely; not a period

Shall be unsaid for me: Against the

Of malice, or of sorcery, or that power Which erring men call Chance, this I hold firm:—

Virtue may be assail'd, but never hurt, Surpriz'd by unjust force, but not enthrall'd;

Yea, even that, which mischief meant most harm.

Shall in the happy trial prove most glory: But evil on itself shall back recoil,

And mix no more with goodness; when at last

Gather'd like scum, and settled to itself, It shall be in eternal restless change Self-fed, and self-consumed: If this fail, The pillar'd firmament is rottenness,

And earth's base built on stubble.—But come, let's on!

Against the opposing will and arm of Heaven

May never this just sword be lifted up! But for that damn'd magician, let him be girt

With all the grisly legions that troop Under the sooty flag of Acheron,

Harpies and Hydras, or all the monstrous forms

'Twixt Africa and Ind, I'll find him out, And force him to return his purchase back,

Or drag him by the curls to a foul death, Curs'd as his life.

Spir. Alas! good vent'rous Youth, I love thy courage yet, and bold emprise; But here thy sword can do thee little stead; Far other arms and other weapons must

Be those, that quell the might of hellish charms:

He with his bare wand can unthread thy joints,

And crumble all thy sinews.

El. Br. Why pr'ythee, Shepherd, How durst thou then thyself approach so near,

As to make this relation?

Spir. Care, and utmost shifts, How to secure the lady from surprisal, Brought to my mind a certain shepherd

lad,

Of small regard to see to, yet well skill'd In every virtuous plant, and healing herb, That spreads her verdant leaf to the morning ray:

He lov'd me well, and oft would beg me sing;

Which when I did, he on the tender grass

Would sit, and hearken even to ecstasy, And in requital ope his leathern scrip,

And show me simples of a thousand names,

Telling their strange and vigorous faculties: Amongst the rest a small unsightly root, But of divine effect, he cull'd me out; The leaf was darkish, and had prickles

on it,

But in another country, as he said, Bore a bright golden flower, but not in this soil:

Unknown, and like esteem'd, and the dull swain

Treads on it daily with his clouted shoon: And yet more med'cinal is it than that Moly

That Hermes once to wise Ulysses gave; He call'd it Hæmony, and gave it me, And bade me keep it as of sovran use 'Gainst all enchantments, mildew blast,

or damp, Or ghastly furies' apparition.

I purs'd it up, but little reckoning made, Till now that this extremity compell'd:

But now I find it true; for by this means I knew the foul enchanter though disguis'd,

Enter'd the very lime-twigs of his spells, And yet came off: If you have this about you,

(As I will give you when we go,) you may Boldly assault the necromancer's hall;

Where if he be, with dauntless hardihood,

And brandish'd blade, rush on him; break his glass,

And shed the luscious liquour on the ground,

But seize his wand; though he and his curs'd crew

Fierce sign of battle make, and menace high,

Or like the sons of Vulcan vomit smoke, Yet will they soon retire, if he but shrink. El. Br. Thyrsis, lead on apace, I'll follow thee:

And some good Angel bear a shield before us!

The Scene changes to a stately palace, set out with all manner of deliciousness: soft musick, tables spread with all dainties.

COMUS appears with his rabble, and THE LADY set in an enchanted chair, to whom he offers his glass, which she puts by, and goes about to rise.

Com. Nay, Lady, sit; if I but wave this wand.

Your nerves are all chain'd up in alablaster,

And you a statue, or, as Daphne was,

Root-bound, that fled Apollo.

Lad. Fool, do not boast;

Thou canst not touch the freedom of my mind

With all thy charms, although this corporal rind

Thou hast immanacled while Heaven sees good.

Com. Why are you vex'd, Lady? Why do you frown?

Here dwell no frowns, nor anger; from these gates

Sorrow flies far: See, here be all the pleasures,

That fancy can beget on youthful thoughts, When the fresh blood grows lively, and returns

Brisk as the April buds in primrose season. And first, behold this cordial julep here, That flames and dances in his crystal bounds.

With spirits of balm and fragrant syrops mix'd:

Not that Nepenthes, which the wife of

In Egypt gave to Jove-born Helena,
Is of such power to stir up joy as this,
To life so friendly, or so cool to thirst.
Why should you be so cruel to yourself,
And to those dainty limbs, which Nature
lent

For gentle usage and soft delicacy?
But you invert the covenants of her trust,
And harshly deal, like an ill borrower,
With that which you receiv'd on other
terms;

Scorning the unexempt condition, By which all mortal frailty must subsist, Refreshment after toil, ease after pain, That have been tired all day without re-

past,

And timely rest have wanted; but, fair Virgin,

This will restore all soon.

Lad. 'T will not, false traitor!
'T will not restore the truth and honesty
That thou hast banish'd from thy tongue
with lies.

Was this the cottage, and the safe abode, Thou toldst me of? What grim aspects are these,

These ugly-headed monsters? Mercy guard me!

Hence with thy brew'd enchantments, foul deceiver!

Hast thou betray'd my credulous innocence With visor'd falsehood and base forgery? And would'st thou seek again to trap me here

With lickerish baits, fit to ensnare a brute? Were it a draught for Juno when she banquets,

I would not taste thy treasonous offer;

But such as are good men can give good things;

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And that which is not good is not delicious To a well-govern'd and wise appetite.

Com. O foolishness of men! that lend their ears

To those budge doctors of the Stoick fur, And fetch their precepts from the Cynick tub,

Praising the lean and sallow Abstinence.
Wherefore did Nature pour her bounties
forth

With such a full and unwithdrawing hand, Covering the earth with odours, fruits, and flocks,

Thronging the seas with spawn innumerable,

But all to please and sate the curious taste?

And set to work millions of spinning worms,

That in their green shops weave the smooth-hair'd silk,

To deck her sons; and, that no corner might

Be vacant of her plenty, in her own loins She hutch'd the all-worshipt ore, and precious gems,

To store her children with: If all the world

Should in a pet of temperance feed on pulse,

Drink the clear stream, and nothing wear but frieze,

The All-giver would be unthank'd, would be unprais'd,

Not half his riches known, and yet despis'd:

And we should serve him as a grudging master,

As a penurious niggard of his wealth,

And live like Nature's bastards, not her sons,

Who would be quite surcharg'd with her own weight,

And strangled with her waste fertility;

The earth cumber'd, and the wing'd air dark'd with plumes,

The herds would over-multitude their lords,

The sea o'erfraught would swell, and the unsought diamonds

Would so imblaze the forehead of the deep,

And so bestud with stars, that they below Would grow inur'd to light, and come at last

To gaze upon the sun with shameless brows.

List, Lady; be not coy, and be not cosen'd

With that same vaunted name, Virginity.

Beauty is Nature's coin, must not be hoarded,

But must be current; and the good thereof Consists in mutual and partaken bliss,

Unsavoury in the enjoyment of itself;

If you let slip time, like a neglected rose.

It withers on the stalk with languish'd

Beauty is Nature's brag, and must be

In courts, at feasts, and high solemnities, Where most may wonder at the workmanship;

It is for homely features to keep home,
They had their name thence; coarse complexions

And cheeks of sorry grain will serve to

The sampler, and to tease the huswife's wool.

What need a vermeil-tinctur'd lip for that, Love-darting eyes, or tresses like the Morn?

There was another meaning in these gifts; Think what, and be advis'd; you are but young yet.

Lad. I had not thought to have unlock'd my lips

In this unhallow'd air, but that this juggler

Would think to charm my judgement, as mine eyes,

Obtruding false rules prank'd in reason's garb.

I hate when Vice can bolt her arguments, And Virtue has no tongue to check her pride.—

Impostor! do not charge most innocent Nature,

As if she would her children should be riotous

With her abundance; she, good cateress, Means her provision only to the good, That live according to her sober laws, And holy dictate of spare Temperance: If every just man, that now pines with want.

Had but a moderate and beseeming share Of that which lewdly-pamper'd Luxury Now heaps upon some few with vast excess.

Nature's full blessings would be well dispens'd

In unsuperfluous even proportion,

And she no whit incumber'd with her store; And then the Giver would be better thank'd,

His praise due paid: For swinish Gluttony Ne'er looks to Heaven amidst his gorgeous feast,

But with besotted base ingratitude Crams, and blasphemes his Feeder. Shall I go on?

Or have I said enough? To him that dares Arm his profane tongue with contemptuous words

Against the sun-clad Power of Chastity, Fain would I something say, yet to what end?

Thou hast nor ear, nor soul, to apprehend The sublime notion, and high mystery That must be utter'd to unfold the sage And serious doctrine of Virginity;

And thou art worthy that thou should'st not know

More happiness than this thy present lot. Enjoy your dear wit, and gay rhetorick, That hath so well been taught her dazzling fence:

Thou art not fit to hear thyself convinced: Yet, should I try, the uncontrouled worth Of this pure cause would kindle my rapt spirits

To such a flame of sacred vehemence, That dumb things would be mov'd to sympathize,

And the brute Earth would lend her nerves, and shake,

Till all thy magick structures, rear'd so high,

Were shatter'd into heaps o'er thy false head.

Com. She fables not; I feel that I do fear Her words set off by some superiour power; And though not mortal, yet a cold shuddering dew

Dips me all o'er, as when the wrath of Jove

Speaks thunder, and the chains of Erebus, To some of Saturn's crew. I must dissemble,

And try her yet more strongly.—Come, no more;

This is mere moral babble, and direct' Against the canon-laws of our foundation; I must not suffer this; yet 't is but the lees And settlings of a melancholy blood:

But this will cure all straight; one sip of this

Will bathe the drooping spirits in delight, Beyond the bliss of dreams. Be wise, and taste.—

The Brothers rush in with swords drawn, wrest his glass out of his hand, and break it against the ground; his rout make sign of resistance, but are all driven in. The Attendant Spirit comes in.

Spir. What, have you let the false enchanter 'scape?

O ye mistook, ye should have snatch'd his wand,

And bound him fast; without his rod revers'd,

And backward mutters of dissevering power,

We cannot free the Lady that sits here In stony fetters fix'd, and motionless: Yet stay, be not disturb'd; now I bethink

me,

Some other means I have which may be us'd,

Which once of Melibœus old I learnt, The soothest shepherd that e'er piped on plains.

There is a gentle Nymph not far from hence,

That with moist curb sways the smooth Severn stream,

Sabrina is her name, a virgin pure;

Whilom she was the daughter of Locrine, That had the scepter from his father Brute. She, guiltless damsel, flying the mad pursuit

Of her enraged stepdame Guendolen, Commended her fair innocence to the flood, That staid her flight with his cross-flowing course.

The Water-Nymphs, that in the bottom play'd,

Held up their pearled wrists, and took her in,

Bearing her straight to aged Nereus' hall; Who, piteous of her woes, rear'd her lank head,

And gave her to his daughters to imbathe In nectar'd lavers, strew'd with asphodel; And through the porch and inlet of each sense

Dropt in ambrosial oils, till she reviv'd,
And underwent a quick immortal change,
Made Goddess of the river: still she retains
Her maiden gentleness, and oft at eve
Visits the herds along the twilight
meadows,

Helping all urchin blasts, and ill-luck signs

That the shrewd meddling elf delights to make,

Which she with precious vial'd liquours heals:

For which the shepherds at their festivals Carol her goodness loud in rustick lays, And throw sweet garland wreaths into her stream

Of pansies, pinks, and gaudy daffadils. And, as the old swain said, she can unlock

The clasping charm, and thaw the numming spell,

If she be right invok'd in warbled song; For maidenhood she loves, and will be swift

To aid a virgin, such as was herself, In hard-besetting need; this will I try, And add the power of some adjuring verse.

Song

Sabrina fair,
Listen where thou art sitting
Under the glassy, cool, translucent wave,
In twisted braids of lillies knitting
The loose train of thy amber-dropping hair;
Listen for dear honour's sake,
Goddess of the silver lake,
Listen, and save.

Listen, and appear to us,
In name of great Oceanus;
By the earth-shaking Neptune's mace,
And Tethys' grave majestick pace,
By hoary Nereus' wrinkled look,
And the Carpathian wisard's hook,
By scaly Triton's winding shell,
And old sooth-saying Glaucus' spell,
By Leucothea's lovely hands,
And her Son, that rules the strands,
By Thetis' tinsel-slipper'd feet,
And the songs of Syrens sweet,
By dead Parthenope's dear tomb,
And fair Ligea's golden comb,

Wherewith she sits on diamond rocks,
Sleeking her soft alluring locks;
By all the Nymphs that nightly dance
Upon thy streams with wily glance,
Rise, rise, and heave thy rosy head,
From thy coral-paven bed,
And bridle in thy headlong wave,
Till thou our summons answer'd have.
Listen, and save!

SABRINA rises, attended by Water-Nymphs, and sings

By the rushy-fringed bank, Where grows the willow, and the osier dank,

My sliding chariot stays, Thick set with agate, and the azurn sheen Of turkis blue, and emerald green,

That in the channel strays;
Whilst from off the waters fleet
Thus I set my printless feet
O'er the cowslip's velvet head,
That bends not as I tread:

Gentle Swain, at thy request,

I am here.

Spir. Goddess dear, We implore thy powerful hand To undo the charmed band Of true virgin here distrest,

Through the force, and through the wile,

Of unblest enchanter vile.

Sabr. Shepherd, 'tis my office best
To help ensnared chastity:
Brightest Lady, look on me;
Thus I sprinkle on thy breast
Drops, that from my fountain pure
I have kept, of precious cure;
Thrice upon thy finger's tip,
Thrice upon thy rubied lip:
Next this marble venom'd seat,
Smear'd with gums of glutinous heat,
I touch with chaste palms moist and cold:—

Now the spell hath lost his hold; And I must haste, ere morning hour, To wait in Amphitrite's bower.

SABRINA descends, and THE LADY rises out of her seat

Spir. Virgin, daughter of Locrine Sprung of old Anchises' line, May thy brimmed waves for this Their full tribute never miss From a thousand petty rills, That tumble down the snowy hills: Summer drouth, or singed air, Never scorch thy tresses fair,

Nor wet October's torrent flood
Thy molten crystal fill with mud;
May thy billows roll ashore
The beryl and the golden ore;
May thy lofty head be crown'd
With many a tower and terrace round,
And here and there thy banks upon
With groves of myrrh and cinnamon!
Come, Lady, while Heaven lends us

grace,

Let us fly this cursed place, Lest the sorcerer us entice With some other new device. Not a waste or needless sound, Till we come to holier ground; I shall be your faithful guide Through this gloomy covert wide, And not many furlongs thence Is your Father's residence, Where this night are met in state Many a friend to gratulate His wish'd presence; and beside All the swains, that there abide, With jigs and rural dance resort; We shall catch them at their sport, And our sudden coming there Will double all their mirth and chere; Come, let us haste, the stars grow high, But night sits monarch yet in the mid sky.

The Scene changes, presenting Ludlow Town and the President's Castle; then come in Country Dancers, after them the ATTENDANT SPIRIT, with the two BROTHERS and THE LADY.

Song

Spir. Back, Shepherds, back; enough your play,
Till next sun-shine holiday:
Here be, without duck or nod,
Other trippings to be trod
Of lighter toes, and such court guise
As Mercury did first devise,
With the mincing Dryades
On the lawns, and on the leas.

This second Song presents them to their Father and Mother

Noble Lord, and Lady bright,
I have brought ye new delight,
Here behold so goodly grown
Three fair branches of your own;
Heaven hath timely tried their youth,
Their faith, their patience, and their truth,
And sent them here through hard assays,
With a crown of deathless praise,
To triumph in victorious dance
O'er sensual Folly and Intemperance.

The dances [being] ended, the Spirit epiloguizes

Spir. To the ocean now I fly, And those happy climes that lie Where day never shuts his eve. Up in the broad fields of the sky: There I suck the liquid air All amidst the gardens fair Of Hesperus, and his daughters three That sing about the golden tree: Along the crisped shades and bowers Revels the spruce and jocund Spring: The Graces, and the rosy-bosom'd Hours, Thither all their bounties bring: There eternal Summer dwells. And West-Winds, with musky wing, About the cedarn alleys fling Nard and cassia's balmy smells. Iris there with humid bow Waters the odorous banks, that blow Flowers of more mingled hew Than her purfled scarf can shew, And drenches with Elvsian dew (List, mortals, if your ears be true,) Beds of hyacinth and roses, Where young Adonis oft reposes, Waxing well of his deep wound In slumber soft, and on the ground

Sadly sits the Assyrian queen:
But far above in spangled sheen
Celestial Cupid, her fam'd son, advanc'd,
Holds his dear Psyche sweet entranc'd,
After her wandering labours long,
Till free consent the gods among
Make her his eternal bride,
And from her fair unspotted side
Two blissful twins are to be born,
Youth and Joy; so Jove hath sworn.

But now my task is smoothly done, I can fly, or I can run, Quickly to the green earth's end, Where the bow'd welkin slow doth bend; And from thence can soar as soon To the corners of the moon.

Mortals, that would follow me, Love Virtue; she alone is free: She can teach ye how to climb Higher than the sphery chime; Or if Virtue feeble were, Heaven itself would stoop to her.

Lycidas

In this MONODY, the Author bewails a learned Friend, unfortunately drowned in his passage from Chester on the Irish Seas, 1637. And by occasion foretells the ruin of our corrupted Clergy, then in their highth.

Yet once more, O ye laurels, and once

Ye myrtles brown, with ivy never-sere, I come to pluck your berries harsh and crude,

And, with forc'd fingers rude,

Shatter your leaves before the mellowing year:

Bitter constraint, and sad occasion dear, Compels me to disturb your season due: For Lycidas is dead, dead ere his prime, Young Lycidas, and hath not left his peer: Who would not sing for Lycidas? He knew

Himself to sing, and build the lofty rhyme. He must not float upon his watery bier
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K

Unwept, and welter to the parching wind, Without the meed of some melodious tear. Begin then, Sisters of the sacred well.

That from beneath the seat of Jove doth spring:

Begin, and somewhat loudly sweep the string.

Hence with denial vain, and coy excuse:

So may some gentle Muse
With lucky words favour my

With lucky words favour my destin'd urn;

And as he passes turn,

And bid fair peace be to my sable shroud. For we were nurs'd upon the self-same hill,

Fed the same flock by fountain, shade, and rill.

Together both, ere the high lawns appear'd Under the opening eye-lids of the morn,

We drove afield, and both together heard What time the gray-fly winds her sultry horn.

Battening our flocks with the fresh dews of night,

Oft till the star, that rose, at evening, bright,

Toward heaven's descent had slop'd his westering wheel.

Mean while the rural ditties were not mute, Temper'd to the oaten flute;

LVCIDAS

Rough Satyrs danc'd, and Fauns with cloven heel

From the glad sound would not be absent long:

And old Damætas lov'd to hear our song. But, O the heavy change, now thou art gone,

Now thou art gone, and never must return!

Thee, Shepherd, thee the woods, and desart caves

With wild thyme and the gadding vine o'ergrown,

And all their echoes mourn:

The willows, and the hazel copses green, Shall now no more be seen

Fanning their joyous leaves to thy soft

lavs.

As killing as the canker to the rose,

Or taint-worm to the weanling herds that graze.

Or frost to flowers, that their gay wardrobe wear.

When first the white-thorn blows:

Such, Lycidas, thy loss to shepherd's ear.

Where were ye, Nymphs, when the remorseless deep

Clos'd o'er the head of your lov'd Lycidas? For neither were ye playing on the steep,

Where your old Bards, the famous Druids, lie,

Nor on the shaggy top of Mona high,

Nor yet where Deva spreads her wisard stream:

Ay me! I fondly dream!

Had ye been there—for what could that have done?

What could the Muse herself that Orpheus bore.

The Muse herself, for her enchanting son, Whom universal Nature did lament,

When, by the rout that made the hideous roar,

His goary visage down the stream was sent.

Down the swift Hebrus to the Lesbian shore?

Alas! what boots it with incessant care To tend the homely, slighted, shepherd's trade,

And strictly meditate the thankless Muse? Were it not better done, as others use, To sport with Amaryllis in the shade, Or with the tangles of Neæra's hair? Fame is the spur that the clear spirit doth raise

(That last infirmity of noble mind)
To scorn delights, and live laborious days;
But the fair guerdon when we hope to find,

And think to burst out into sudden blaze, Comes the blind Fury with the abhorred shears,

And slits the thin-spun life. "But not the praise,"

Phœbus replied, and touch'd my trembling ears;

"Fame is no plant that grows on mortal soil,

"Nor in the glistering foil

"Set off to the world, nor in broad rumour lies;

"But lives and spreads aloft by those pure eyes,

"And perfect witness of all-judging Jove; "As he pronounces lastly on each deed,

"Of so much fame in heaven expect thy

O fountain Arethuse, and thou honour'd flood,

Smooth-sliding Mincius, crown'd with vocal reeds!

That strain I heard was of a higher mood: But now my oat proceeds,

And listens to the herald of the sea That came in Neptune's plea;

He ask'd the waves, and ask'd the felon winds,

What hard mishap hath doom'd this gentle swain?

And question'd every gust of rugged wings

That blows from off each beaked promontory:

They knew not of his story;

And sage Hippotades their answer brings, That not a blast was from his dungeon stray'd;

The air was calm, and on the level brine Sleek Panope with all her sisters play'd.

It was that fatal and perfidious bark,

Built in the eclipse, and rigg'd with curses dark,

That sunk so low that sacred head of thine.

Next Camus, reverend sire, went footing slow,

His mantle hairy, and his bonnet sedge, Inwrought with figures dim, and on the edge

Like to that sanguine flower inscrib'd with woe.

"Ah! who hath reft (quoth he) my dearest pledge?"

Last came, and last did go,

The pilot of the Galilean lake;

Two massy keys he bore of metals twain, (The golden opes, the iron shuts amain,) He shook his miter'd locks, and stern bespake:

- "How well could I have spared for thee, young swain,
- "Enow of such, as for their bellies' sake
- "Creep, and intrude, and climb into the fold?
- "Of other care they little reckoning make,
- "Than how to scramble at the shearers' feast,
- "And shove away the worthy bidden guest.
- "Blind mouths! that scarce themselves know how to hold
- "A sheep-hook, or have learn'd aught else the least
- "That to the faithful herdman's art belongs!
- "What recks it them? What need they? They are sped;
- "And, when they list, their lean and flashy songs
- "Grate on their scrannel pipes of wretched straw;
- "The hungry sheep look up, and are not fed,
- "But, swoln with wind and the rank mist they draw,
- "Rot inwardly, and foul contagion spread:
- "Besides what the grim wolf with privy paw
- "Daily devours apace, and nothing sed:

"But that two-handed engine at the door "Stands ready to smite once, and smite no more."

Return, Alpheus, the dread voice is past, That shrunk thy streams; return, Sicilian Muse.

. And call the vales, and bid them hither cast

Their bells, and flowerets of a thousand hues.

Ye valleys low, where the mild whispers use

Of shades, and wanton winds, and gushing brooks,

On whose fresh lap the swart-star sparely looks;

Throw hither all your quaint enamell'd eyes,

That on the green turf suck the honied showers,

And purple all the ground with vernal flowers.

Bring the rathe primrose that forsaken dies,

The tufted crow-toe, and pale jessamine, The white pink, and the pansy freak'd with jet,

The glowing violet,

The musk-rose, and the well-attir'd woodbine,

With cowslips wan that hang the pensive head,

And every flower that sad embroidery wears:

Bid amaranthus all his beauty shed,

And daffadillies fill their cups with tears, To strew the laureat herse where Lycid

lies.

For so to interpose a little ease,

Let our frail thoughts dally with false surmise;

Ay me! Whilst thee the shores and sounding seas

Wash far away, where'er thy bones are hurl'd,

Whether beyond the stormy Hebrides,

Where thou perhaps, under the whelming tide,

Visit'st the bottom of the monstrous world; Or whether thou, to our moist vows denied,

Sleep'st by the fable of Bellerus old,

Where the great Vision of the guarded Mount

Looks towards Namancos and Bayona's hold;

Look homeward, Angel, now, and melt with ruth:

And, O ye dolphins, waft the hapless youth.

Weep no more, woful Shepherds, weep no more,

For Lycidas, your sorrow, is not dead, Sunk though he be beneath the watery floor:

So sinks the day-star in the ocean bed, And yet anon repairs his drooping head, And tricks his beams, and with new-

spangled ore

Flames in the forehead of the morning sky:

So Lycidas sunk low, but mounted high, Through the dear might of Him that walk'd the waves;

Where, other groves and other streams along,

With nectar pure his oozy locks he laves, And hears the unexpressive nuptial song, In the blest kingdoms meek of joy and love.

There entertain him all the saints above, In solemn troops, and sweet societies,

That sing, and, singing, in their glory move,

And wipe the tears for ever from his eyes.

Now, Lycidas, the shepherds weep no more;

Henceforth thou art the Genius of the shore,

In thy large recompence, and shalt be good

To all that wander in that perilous flood.

Thus sang the uncouth swain to the .oaks and rills,

While the still morn went out with sandals gray;

He touch'd the tender stops of various quills, With eager thought warbling his Dorick lay:

And now the sun had stretch'd out all the hills,

And now was dropt into the western bay: At last he rose, and twitch'd his mantle blue:

To-morrow to fresh woods, and pastures

Sonnet I

TO THE NIGHTINGALE

O nightingale, that on yon bloomy spray Warblest at eve, when all the woods are still;

Thou with fresh hope the lover's heart dost fill,

While the jolly Hours lead on propitious May;

Thy liquid notes that close the eye of day, First heard before the shallow cuckoo's bill,

Portend success in love; O, if Jove's will

Have link'd that amorous power to thy soft lay,

Now timely sing, ere the rude bird of hate Foretel my hopeless doom in some grove nigh;

As thou from year to year hast sung too late

For my relief, yet hadst no reason why: Whether the Muse, or Love, call thee his mate,

Both them I serve, and of their train am I.

Sonnet II

Donna leggiadra, il cui bel nome honora
L'herbosa val di Rheno, e il nobil varco,
Ben è colui d'ogni valore scarco,
Qual tuo spirto gentil non innamora:
Che dolcemente mostra si di fuora
De sui atti soavi giamai parco,
E i don', che son d'amor saette ed arco,
La onde l'alta tua virtu s'infiora.
Quando tu vaga parli, o lieta canti
Che mover possa duro alpestre legno,
Guardi ciascun a gli occhi, ed a gli
orecchi
L'entrata, chi di te si truova indegno:

L'entrata, chi di te si truova indegno; Grazia sola di sù gli vaglia, inanti Che'l disio amoroso al cuor s'invecchi.

Sonnet III

Qual in colle aspro, al imbrunir di sera L'avezza giovinetta pastorella Va bagnando l'herbetta strana e bella Che mal si spande a disusata spera Fuor di sua natia alma primavera, Cosi Amor meco insù la lingua snella Desta il fior novo di strania favella, Mentre io di te, vezzosamente altera, Canto, dal mio buon popol non inteso E'l bel Tamigi cangio col bel Arno. Amor lo volse, ed io a l'altrui peso Seppi ch' Amor cosa mai volse indarno. Deh! foss' il mio cuor lento e'l duro seno

A chi pianta dal ciel si buon terreno.

Canzone

Ridonsi donne e giovani amorosi
M'accostandosi attorno, e perche scrivi,
Perche tu scrivi in lingua ignota e strana
Verseggiando d'amor, e come t'osi?
Dinne, se la tua speme sia mai vana,
E de pensieri lo miglior t'arrivi;
Cosi mi van burlando, altri rivi
Altri lidi t'aspettan, ed altre onde
Nelle cui verdi sponde
Spuntati ad hor, ad hor a la tua chioma
L'immortal guiderdon d'eterne frondi
Perche alle spalle tue soverchia soma?
Canzon dirotti, e tu per me rispondi
Dice mia Donna, e'l suo dir, è il mio cuore
Questa è lingua di cui si vanta Amore.

Sonnet IV

Diodati, e te'l dirò con maraviglia. Quel ritroso io ch' amor spreggiar soléa E de suoi lacci spesso mi ridéa Gia caddi, ov'huom dabben talhor s'impiglia.

Ne treccie d'oro, ne guancia vermiglia M'abbaglian sì, ma sotto nova idea Pellegrina bellezza che'l cuor bea, Portamenti alti honesti, e nelle ciglia Quel sereno fulgor d'amabil nero, Parole adorne di lingua piu d'una, E'l cantar che di mezzo l'hemispero Traviar ben può la faticosa Luna, E degli occhi suoi auventa si gran fuoco Che l'incerar gli orecchi mi fia poco.

Sonnet V

Per certo i bei vostr' occhi, Donna mia
Esser non puo che non sian lo mio sole
Si mi percuoton forte, come ei suole
Per l'arene di Libia chi s'invia,
Mentre un caldo vapor (ne senti pria)
Da quel lato si spinge ove mi duole,
Che forse amanti nelle lor parole
Chiaman sospir; io non so che si sia:
Parte rinchiusa, e turbida si cela
Scosso mi il petto, e poi n'uscendo poco
Quivi d'attorno o s'agghiaccia, o s'ingiela;

Ma quanto a gli occhi giunge a trovar loco Tutte le notti a me suol far piovose Finche mia Alba rivien colma di rose.

Sonnet VI

Giovane piano, e semplicette amante Poi che fuggir me stesso in dubbio sono, Madonna a voi del mio cuor l'humil dono Farò divoto; io certo a prove tante

L'hebbi fedele, intrepido, costante,
De pensieri leggiadro, accorto, e buono;
Quando rugge il gran mondo, e scocca
il tuono,

S'arma di se, e d'intero diamante:
Tanto del forse, e d'invidia sicuro,
Di timori, e speranze, al popol use,
Quanto d'ingegno, e d'alto valor vago,
E di cetra sonora, e delle muse:

Sol troverete in tal parte men duro Ove Amor mise l'insanabil ago.

Sonnet VII

ON HIS BEING ARRIVED TO THE AGE OF TWENTY-THREE

How soon hath Time, the subtle thief of youth,

Stoln on his wing my three and twentieth year!

My hasting days fly on with full career, But my late spring no bud or blossom shew'th.

Perhaps my semblance might deceive the truth,

That I to manhood am arriv'd so near; And inward ripeness doth much less appear,

That some more timely-happy spirits endu'th.

Yet be it less or more, or soon or slow, It shall be still in strictest measure even To that same lot, however mean or high,

Toward which Time leads me, and the Will of Heaven:

All is, if I have grace to use it so, . As ever in my great Task-Master's eye.

Sonnet VIII

WHEN THE ASSAULT WAS INTENDED TO THE CITY

Captain, or Colonel, or Knight in arms, Whose chance on these defenceless doors may seize,

If deed of honour did thee ever please, Guard them, and him within protect from harms.

He can requite thee; for he knows the

That call fame on such gentle acts as these,

And he can spread thy name o'er lands and seas,

Whatever clime the sun's bright circle warms.

Lift not thy spear against the Muses' bower:

The great Emathian Conqueror bid spare
The house of Pindarus, when temple and
tower

Went to the ground: And the repeated air
Of sad Electra's poet had the power
To save the Athenian walls from ruin bare.

Sonnet IX

TO A VIRTUOUS YOUNG LADY

Lady, that in the prime of earliest youth Wisely hath shunn'd the broad way and the green,

And with those few art eminently seen, That labour up the hill of heavenly truth.

The better part with Mary and with Ruth Chosen thou hast; and they that overween.

And at thy growing virtues fret their spleen,

No anger find in thee, but pity and ruth. Thy care is fix'd, and zealously attends

To fill thy odorous lamp with deeds of light,

And hope that reaps not shame. Therefore be sure

Thou, when the Bridegroom with his feastful friends

Passes to bliss at the mid hour of night, Hast gain'd thy entrance, Virgin wise and pure.

Sonnet X

TO THE LADY MARGARET

Daughter to that good Earl, once President

Of England's Council and her Treasury, Who liv'd in both, unstain'd with gold or fee,

And left them both, more in himself content,

Till the sad breaking of that Parliament Broke him, as that dishonest victory At Chæronea, fatal to liberty,

Kill'd with report that old man eloquent. Though later born than to have known the

days

Wherein your father flourish'd, yet by you, Madam, methinks I see him living yet; So well your words his noble virtues praise,

That all both judge you to relate them true.

And to possess them, honour'd Margaret.

Sonnet XI

ON THE DETRACTION WHICH FOLLOWED UPON MY WRITING CERTAIN TREATISES

A Book was writ of late call'd Tetrachordon,

And woven close, both matter, form, and stile;

The subject new: it walk'd the Town awhile,

Numbering good intellects; now seldom por'd on.

Cries the stall-reader, Bless us! what a

A title-page is this! and some in file

. Stand spelling false, while one might walk to Mile-

End Green. Why is it harder, Sirs, than Gordon,

Colkitto, or Macdonnel, or Galasp?

Those rugged names to our like mouths grow sleek,

That would have made Quintilian stare and gasp.

SONNET XI

Thy age, like ours, O Soul of Sir John Cheek,

Hated not learning worse than toad or asp,

When thou taught'st Cambridge, and king Edward Greek.

Sonnet XII

ON THE SAME

I did but prompt the age to quit their clogs

By the known rules of ancient liberty, When straight a barbarous noise environs me

Of owls and cuckoos, asses, apes and dogs:

As when those hinds that were transform'd to frogs

Rail'd at Latona's twin-born progeny, Which after held the sun and moon in fee.

But this is got by casting pearl to hogs; That bawl for freedom in their senseless mood,

And still revolt when truth would set them free.

Licence they mean when they cry Liberty;

For who loves that, must first be wise and good;

SONNET XII

But from that mark how far they rove we see,

For all this waste of wealth, and loss of blood.

Sonnet XIII

TO MR. H. LAWES ON THE PUBLISH-ING HIS AIRS

Harry, whose tuneful and well measur'd song

First taught our English musick how to span

Words with just note and accent, not to

With Midas ears, committing short and long:

Thy worth and skill exempts thee from the throng,

With praise enough for Envy to look wan:

To after age thou shalt be writ the man, That with smooth air could'st humour best our tongue.

Thou honour'st verse, and verse must lend her wing

To honour thee, the priest of Phœbus' quire,

SONNET XIII

That tun'st their happiest lines in hymn, or story.

Dante shall give Fame leave to set thee higher

Than his Casella, whom he woo'd to sing Met in the milder shades of Purgatory.

Sonnet XIV

ON THE RELIGIOUS MEMORY OF MRS. CATHERINE THOMSON, MY CHRISTIAN FRIEND, DE-CEASED 16 DECEMB., 1646



When Faith and Love, which parted from thee never,

Had ripen'd thy just soul to dwell with God,

Meekly thou didst resign this earthly load Of death, call'd life, which us from life doth sever.

Thy works and alms, and all thy good endeavour,

Staid not behind, nor in the grave were trod:

But, as Faith pointed with her golden rod.

Follow'd thee up to joy and bliss for ever.

Love led them on, and Faith, who knew them best

Thy hand-maids, clad them o'er with purple beams

SONNET XIV

And azure wings, that up they flew so drest,

And spake the truth of thee on glorious themes

Before the Judge; who thenceforth bid thee rest,

And drink thy fill of pure immortal streams.

On the new Forcers of Conscience under the Long Parliament



Because you have thrown off your Prelate lord,

And with stiff vows renounc'd his Liturgy,

To seize the widow'd whore Plurality From them whose sin ye envied, not abhorr'd;

Dare ye for this adjure the civil sword To force our consciences that Christ set free.

And ride us with a classick hierarchy Taught ye by mere A. S. and Rutherford?

Men, whose life, learning, faith, and pure intent,

Would have been held in high esteem with Paul,

Must now be nam'd and printed Hereticks By shallow Edwards and Scotch what d'ye call:

But we do hope to find out all your tricks,

FORCERS OF CONSCIENCE

Your plots and packing worse than those of Trent,

That so the Parliament

May, with their wholesome and preventive shears.

Clip your phylacteries, though baulk your ears,

And succour our just fears, When they shall read this clearly in your charge,

New Presbyter is but old Priest writ large.

Sonnet XV

TO THE LORD GENERAL FAIRFAX

Fairfax, whose name in arms through Europe rings,

Filling each mouth with envy or with praise,

And all her jealous monarchs with amaze

And rumours loud, that daunt remotest kings;

Thy firm unshaken virtue ever brings

Victory home, though new rebellions raise

Their Hydra heads, and the false North displays

Her broken league to imp their serpentwings.

O yet a nobler task awaits thy hand,

(For what can war but endless war still breed?)

(B246) 161 M

SONNET XV

Till truth and right from violence be freed,

And publick faith clear'd from the shameful brand

Of publick fraud. In vain doth Valour bleed,

While Avarice and Rapine share the land.

Sonnet XVI

TO THE LORD GENERAL CROMWELL

Cromwell, our chief of men, who through a cloud

Not of war only, but detractions rude, Guided by faith and matchless fortitude, To peace and truth thy glorious way hast plough'd,

And on the neck of crowned Fortune proud Hast rear'd God's trophies, and his work pursued,

While Darwen stream, with blood of Scots imbrued,

And Dunbar field resounds thy praises loud,

And Worcester's laureat wreath. Yet much remains

To conquer still; Peace hath her victories

No less renown'd than War: New foes arise

Threatening to bind our souls with secular chains:

SONNET XVI

Help us to save free conscience from the paw

Of hireling wolves, whose gospel is their maw.

Sonnet XVII

TO SIR HENRY VANE THE YOUNGER

Vane, young in years, but in sage counsel old,

Than whom a better senator ne'er held The helm of Rome, when gowns, not arms, repell'd

The fierce Epirot and the African bold; Whether to settle peace, or to unfold

The drift of hollow States hard to be spell'd:

Then to advise how War may best, upheld.

Move by her two main nerves, iron and gold,

In all her equipage: besides to know Both spiritual power and civil, what each means.

What severs each, thou hast learn'd, which few have done:

The bounds of either sword to thee we owe:
Therefore on thy firm hand Religion leans
In peace, and reckons thee her eldest son.

Sonnet XVIII

ON THE LATE MASSACRE IN PIEMONT

Avenge, O Lord, thy slaughter'd saints, whose bones

Lie scatter'd on the Alpine mountains cold;

Even them who kept thy truth so pure of old,

When all our fathers worshipt stocks and stones,

Forget not: in thy book record their groans Who were thy sheep, and in their ancient fold

Slain by the bloody Piemontese that roll'd

Mother with infant down the rocks.

Their moans

The vales redoubled to the hills, and they To Heaven. Their martyr'd blood and ashes sow

O'er all the Italian fields, where still doth sway

766

SONNET XVIII

The triple Tyrant; that from these may grow

A hundred-fold, who, having learn'd thy way,

Early may fly the Babylonian woe.

STATE STATE

Sonnet XIX

ON HIS BLINDNESS

When I consider how my light is spent Ere half my days, in this dark world and wide,

And that one talent which is death to hide,

Lodg'd with me useless, though my soul more bent

To serve therewith my Maker, and present

My true account, lest He, returning, chide;

"Doth God exact day-labour, light denied?"

I fondly ask: But Patience, to prevent That murmur, soon replies, "God doth not need

"Either man's work, or his own gifts; who best

"Bear his mild yoke, they serve Him

SONNET XIX

"Is kingly; thousands at his bidding speed,

"And post o'er land and ocean without

rest;

"They also serve who only stand and wait."

Sonnet XX

TO MR. LAWRENCE

Lawrence, of virtuous father virtuous son,

Now that the fields are dank, and ways are mire,

Where shall we sometimes meet, and by the fire

Help waste a sullen day, what may be won

From the hard season gaining? Time will run

On smoother, till Favonius re-inspire

The frozen earth, and clothe in fresh attire

The lilly and rose, that neither sow'd nor spun.

What neat repast shall feast us, light and choice,

Of Attick taste, with wine, whence we may rise

To hear the lute well touch'd, or artful voice

SONNET XX

Warble immortal notes and Tuscan air? He who of those delights can judge, and spare

To interpose them oft, is not unwise.

Sonnet XXI

TO CYRIACK SKINNER

- Cyriack, whose grandsire, on the royal bench
 - Of British Themis, with no mean applause
 - Pronounc'd, and in his volumes taught, our laws.
 - Which others at their bar so often wrench:
- To-day deep thoughts resolve with me to
 - In mirth that, after, no repenting draws; Let Euclid rest, and Archimedes pause,
- And what the Swede intends, and what the French.
- To measure life learn thou betimes, and know
 - Toward solid good what leads the nearest way;
 - For other things mild Heaven a time ordains,

SONNET XXI

And disapproves that care, though wise in show,

That with superfluous burden loads the day,

And, when God sends a cheerful hour, refrains.

Sonnet XXII

TO THE SAME

Cyriack, this three years' day these eyes, though clear,

To outward view, of blemish or of spot, Bereft of light, their seeing have forgot; Nor to their idle orbs doth sight appear Of sun, or moon, or star, throughout the year,

Or man, or woman. Yet I argue not

Against Heaven's hand or will, nor bate a jot

Of heart or hope; but still bear up and steer

Right onward. What supports me, dost thou ask?

The conscience, Friend, to have lost them overplied

In liberty's defence, my noble task,

Of which all Europe rings from side to side.

This thought might lead me through the world's vain mask

Content though blind, had I no better guide.

Sonnet XXIII

ON HIS DECEASED WIFE

Methought I saw my late espoused saint Brought to me, like Alcestis, from the grave,

Whom Jove's great son to her glad husband gave,

Rescu'd from death by force, though pale and faint.

Mine, as whom wash'd from spot of childbed taint

Purification in the old Law did save,

And such, as yet once more I trust to have

Full sight of her in Heaven without restraint,

Came vested all in white, pure as her mind: Her face was veil'd; yet to my fancied sight

Love, sweetness, goodness, in her person shin'd

So clear, as in no face with more delight.

But O, as to embrace me she inclin'd,

I wal'd: she fled; and day brought back

I wak'd; she fled; and day brought back my night.

-

and the real real fields

Translations

annitalitam l'

From Dante

Ah Constantine, of how much ill was cause,

Not thy conversion, but those rich domains That the first wealthy pope receiv'd of thee.

From Dante

Founded in chaste and humble poverty, 'Gainst them that rais'd thee dost thou lift thy horn,

Impudent whore? where hast thou plac'd thy hope?

In thy adulterers, or thy ill-got wealth? Another Constantine comes not in haste.

From Ariosto

And, to be short, at last his guide him brings

Into a goodly valley, where he sees

A mighty mass of things strangely confused,

Things that on earth were lost or were abused.

Then pass'd he to a flowery mountain green,

Which once smelt sweet, now stinks as odiously:

This was the gift, if you the truth will have,

That Constantine to good Sylvester gave.

From Horace

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---Laughing, to teach the truth,

What hinders? As some teachers give to boys

Junkets and knacks, that they may learn apace.

From Horace

——Joking decides great things, Stronger and better oft than earnest can.

From Sophocles

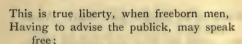




'Tis you that say it, not I. You do the deeds,

And your ungodly deeds find me the words.

From Euripides



Which he who can, and will, deserves high praise:

Who neither can nor will, may hold his peace;

What can be a juster in a state than this?

From Horace



Whom do we count a good man? Whom but he

Who keeps the laws and statutes of the senate,

Who judges in great suits and controversies,

Whose witness and opinion wins the cause? But his own house, and the whole neighbourhood,

Sees his foul inside through his whited skin.

From Seneca

There can be slain

No sacrifice to God more acceptable,

Than an unjust and wicked king.

From Geoffrey of Monmouth

0 0

BRUTUS thus addresses DIANA in the country of LEOGECIA

Goddess of shades, and huntress, who at will

Walk'st on the rowling spheres, and through the deep;

On thy third reign, the earth, look now, and tell

What land, what seat of rest, thou bidst me seek.

What certain seat, where I may worship thee

For aye, with temples vow'd and virgin quires.

To whom, sleeping before the altar, DIANA answers in a vision the same night

Brutus, far to the west in the ocean wide, Beyond the realm of Gaul, a land there lies,

GEOFFREY OF MONMOUTH

Sea-girt it lies, where giants dwelt of old; Now void, it fits thy people: Thither bend Thy course; there shalt thou find a lasting seat;

There to thy sons another Troy shall rise, And kings be born of thee, whose dreadful might

Shall awe the world, and conquer nations bold.

The Fifth Ode of Horace, Lib. I

0 0

What slender youth, bedew'd with liquid odours.

Courts thee on roses in some pleasant cave, Pyrrha? For whom bind'st thou In wreaths thy golden hair,

Plain in thy neatness? O, how oft shall he

On faith and changed gods complain, and seas

Rough with black winds, and storms Unwonted shall admire,

Who now enjoys thee credulous, all gold, Who always vacant, always amiable

Hopes thee, of flattering gales Unmindful! Hapless they,

To whom thou untried seem'st fair! Me, in my vow'd

Picture, the sacred wall declares to have hung

My dank and dropping weeds To the stern god of sea.

Psalm LXXX*

I Thou Shepherd, that dost Israel keep, Give ear in time of need; Who leadest like a flock of sheep Thy loved Joseph's seed; That sitt'st between the Cherubs bright,

Between their wings out-spread; Shine forth, and from thy cloud give

light,

And on our foes thy dread.

2 In Ephraim's view and Benjamin's, And in Manasse's sight,

Awake thy strength, come, and be seen To save us by thy might.

3 Turn us again, thy grace divine To us, O God, vouchsafe;

Cause thou thy face on us to shine, And then we shall be safe.

^{*} Nine of the psalms done into metre wherein all but what is in a different character are the very words of the text, translated from the original. April, 1648, J.M.

PSALM LXXX

4 Lord God of Hosts, how long wilt thou,
How long wilt thou declare
The ampliance winth, and another brown

Thy smoking wrath, and angry brow Against thy people's prayer!

5 Thou feed'st them with the bread of tears;

Their bread with tears they eat;
And mak'st them largely drink the

Wherewith their cheeks are wet.

6 A strife thou mak'st us and a prey
To every neighbour foe;

Among themselves they laugh, they play, And flouts at us they throw.

7 Return us, and thy grace divine, O God of Hosts, vouchsafe; Cause thou thy face on us to shine, And then we shall be safe.

8 A vine from Egypt thou hast brought, Thy free love made it thine, And drov'st out nations, proud and haut, To plant this lovely vine.

9 Thou didst prepare for it a place, And root it deep and fast, That it began to grow apace,

That it began to grow apace, And fill'd the land at last.

The hills were over-spread;
Her boughs as high as cedars tall
Advanc'd their lofty head.

PSALM LXXX

- Down to the sea she sent,
 And upward to that river wide
 Her other branches went.
- 12 Why hast thou laid her hedges low, And broken down her fence, That all may pluck her, as they go, With rudest violence?
- 13 The tusked boar out of the wood
 Upturns it by the roots;
 Wild beasts there brouze, and make
 their food

Her grapes and tender shoots.

Return now, God of Hosts, look down
From Heaven, thy seat divine;
Behold us, but without a frown,

And visit this thy vine.

15 Visit this vine, which thy right hand Hath set, and planted long, And the young branch, that for thyself

Thou hast made firm and strong.

16 But now it is consum'd with fire,
And cut with axes down;
They perish at thy dreadful ire,
At thy rebuke and frown.

17 Upon the man of thy right hand
Let thy good hand be laid;
Upon the son of man, whom thou
Strong for thyself hast made.
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PSALM LXXX

18 So shall we not go back from thee To ways of sin and shame;
Quicken us thou; then gladly we Shall call upon thy Name.
19 Return us, and thy grace divine,

19 Return us, and thy grace divine, Lord God of Hosts, vouchsafe; Cause thou thy face on us to shine, And then we shall be safe.

Psalm LXXXI

I To God our strength sing loud, and clear,

Sing loud to God our King;
To Jacob's God, that all may hear,

Loud acclamations ring.

2 Prepare a hymn, prepare a song, The timbrel hither bring;

The *cheerful* psaltery bring along, And harp with pleasant string.

3 Blow, as is wont, in the new moon With trumpets' lofty sound,

The appointed time, the day whereon Our solemn feast comes round.

4 This was a statute given of old For Israel to observe;

A law of Jacob's God, to hold, From whence they might not swerve.

5 This he a testimony ordain'd In Joseph, not to change,

When as he pass'd through Egypt land; The tongue I heard was strange.

6 From burden, and from slavish toil, I set his shoulder free:

PSALM LXXXI

His hands from pots, and miry soil, Deliver'd were by me.

7 When trouble did thee sore assail, On me then didst thou call;

And I to free thee did not fail,
And led thee out of thrall.

I answer'd thee in thunder deep, -With clouds encompass'd round;

I tried thee at the water steep Of Meriba renown'd.

8 Hear, O my people, hearken well;
I testify to thee,
Thou ancient stock of Israel,

If thou wilt list to me:

9 Throughout the land of thy abode No alien God shall be, Nor shalt thou to a foreign god

In honour bend thy knee.

Thee out of Egypt land;

Ask large enough, and I, besought, Will grant thy full demand.

11 And yet my people would not hear, Nor hearken to my voice; And Israel, whom I lov'd so dear,

Mislik'd me for his choice.

12 Then did I leave them to their will,
And to their wandering mind;
Their own conceits they follow'd still,
Their own devices blind.

PSALM LXXXI

13 O, that my people would be wise, To serve me all their days! And O, that Israel would advise To walk my righteous ways!

14 Then would I soon bring down their foes,

That now so proudly rise;
And turn my hand against all those,
That are their enemies.

To bow to him and bend;

But they his treatle should rangin

But, they, his people, should remain, Their time should have no end.

16 And he would feed them from the shock
With flour of finest wheat,
And satisfy them from the rock
With honey for their meat.

Psalm LXXXII @ @

I God in the great assembly stands
Of kings and lordly states;
Among the gods, on both his hands
He judges and debates.

2 How long will ye pervert the right With judgement false and wrong, Favouring the wicked by your might, Who thence grow bold and strong?

3 Regard the weak and fatherless, Dispatch the poor man's cause; And raise the man in deep distress By just and equal laws.

4 Defend the poor and desolate, And rescue from the hands Of wicked men the low estate Of him that help demands.

5 They know not, nor will understand, In darkness they walk on; The earth's foundations all are mov'd, And out of order gone.

6 I said that ye were gods, yea all The sons of God Most High;

PSALM LXXXII

7 But ve shall die like men and fall, As other princes die.

8 Rise, God; judge thou the earth in might.

This wicked earth redress: For Thou art He who shalt by right The nations all possess.

Psalm LXXXIII

- 0 0
- I Be not thou silent now at length, O God, hold not thy peace; Sit thou not still, O God of strength, We cry, and do not cease.
- 2 For lo, thy furious foes now swell, And storm outrageously; And they that hate thee, proud and fell, Exalt their heads full high.
- 3 Against thy people they contrive
 Their plots and counsels deep;
 Them to ensnare they chiefly strive,
 Whom thou dost hide and keep.
- 4 Come, let us cut them off, say they, Till they no nation be; That Israel's name for ever may Be lost in memory.
- 5 For they consult with all their might, And all, as one in mind, Themselves against thee they unite,
- And in firm union bind.
 6 The tents of Edom, and the brood
 Of scornful Ishmael,
 Moab, with them of Hagar's blood,

That in the desart dwell,

PSALM LXXXIII

7 Gebal and Ammon there conspire, And hateful Amalec,

The Philistines, and they of Tyre, Whose bounds the sea doth check.

8 With them great Ashur also bands,

And doth confirm the knot:

All these have lent their armed hands
To aid the sons of Lot.

9 Do to them as to Midian bold, That wasted all the coast; To Sisera; and, as is told, Thou didst to Jabin's host, When, at the brook of Kishon old, They were repuls'd and slain.

10 At Endor quite cut off, and roll'd
As dung upon the plain.

So let their princes speed;
As Zeba and Zalmunna bled,
So let their princes bleed.

12 For they amidst their pride have said, By right now shall we seize God's houses, and, will now invade Their stately palaces.

13 My God, oh make them as a wheel, No quiet let them find: Giddy and restless let them reel, Like stubble from the wind.

14 As when an aged wood takes fire Which on a sudden strays,

PSALM LXXXIII

The greedy flame runs higher and higher,

Till all the mountains blaze;
15 So with thy whirlwind them pursue,
And with thy tempest chase;

16 And, till they yield thee honour due, Lord, fill with shame their face.

17 Asham'd, and troubled, let them be, Troubled and sham'd for ever; Ever confounded, and so die With shame, and 'scape it never.

18 Then shall they know, that Thou, whose Name

Jehovah is alone,

Art the Most High, and Thou the same O'er all the earth art One.

Psalm LXXXIV

- I How lovely are thy dwellings fair!
 O Lord of Hosts, how dear
 The pleasant tabernacles are,
 Where thou dost dwell so near!
- 2 My soul doth long and almost die Thy courts, O Lord, to see;My heart and flesh aloud do cry, O living God, for thee.
- 3 There even the sparrow, freed from wrong,

Hath found a house of *rest*;
The swallow there, to lay her young,
Hath built her *brooding* nest;
From by thy alters. Lord of Hosts

Even by thy altars, Lord of Hosts, They find their safe abode;

And home they fly from round the coasts Toward thee, my King, my God.

- 4 Happy, who in thy house reside, Where thee they ever praise!
- 5 Happy, whose strength in thee doth bide,

And in their hearts thy ways!

PSALM LXXXIV

6 They pass through Baca's thirsty vale, That dry and barren ground; As through a fruitful watery dale,

Where springs and showers abound.

7 They journey on from strength to strength

With joy and gladsome cheer, Till all before our God at length In Sion do appear.

8 Lord God of Hosts, hear *now* my prayer, O Jacob's God give ear;

9 Thou God, our shield, look on the face Of thy anointed dear,

Io For one day in thy courts to be
Is better, and more blest,
Than in the joys of vanity
A thousand days at best.

I, in the temple of my God,
Had rather keep a door,
Than dwell in tents, and rich abode.

With sin for evermore.

For God the Lord, both sun and shield, Gives grace and glory bright; No good from them shall be withheld Whose ways are just and right.

12 Lord God of Hosts, that reign'st on high; That man is truly blest, Who only on thee doth rely, And in thee only rest.

Psalm LXXXV



- Thy land to favour graciously Thou hast not, Lord, been slack; Thou hast from hard captivity Returned Jacob back.
- 2 The iniquity thou didst forgive That wrought thy people woe; And all their sin, that did thee grieve, Hast hid where none shall know.
- 3 Thine anger all thou hadst remov'd, And calmly didst return From thy fierce wrath which we had prov'd

Far worse than fire to burn.

- 4 God of our saving health and peace, Turn us, and us restore; Thine indignation cause to cease Toward us, and chide no more.
- 5 Wilt thou be angry without end, For ever angry thus? Wilt thou thy frowning ire extend From age to age on us?
- 6 Wilt thou not turn and hear our voice, And us again revive,

PSALM LXXXV

That so thy people may rejoice, By thee preserv'd alive?

7 Cause us to see thy goodness, Lord, To us thy mercy shew; Thy saving health to us afford,

And life in us renew.

8 And now, what God the Lord will speak,

I will go straight and hear, For to his people he speaks peace, And to his saints full dear,

To his dear saints he will speak peace; But let them never more

Return to folly, but surcease To trespass as before.

9 Surely, to such as do him fear Salvation is at hand;

And glory shall ere long appear To dwell within our land.

10 Mercy and Truth, that long were miss'd, Now joyfully are met;

Sweet Peace and Righteousness have kiss'd,

And hand in hand are set.

II Truth from the earth, like to a flower,
Shall bud and blossom then;
And Justice, from her heavenly bower,
Look down on mortal men.

The Lord will also then bestow Whatever thing is good;

PSALM LXXXV

Our land shall forth in plenty throw Her fruits to be our food.

13 Before him Righteousness shall go, His royal harbinger:
Then will he come, and not be slow,

His footsteps cannot err.

Psalm LXXXVI @ 4

- I Thy gracious ear, O Lord, incline, O hear me, I thee pray;
 For I am poor, and almost pine
 With need, and sad decay.
- 2 Preserve my soul; for I have trod Thy ways, and love the just; Save thou thy servant, O my God, Who still in thee doth trust.
- 3 Pity me, Lord, for daily thee I call; 4 O make rejoice Thy servant's soul; for, Lord, to thee I lift my soul and voice.
- 5 For thou art good, thou, Lord, art prone

To pardon, thou to all
Art full of mercy, thou *alone*To them that on thee call.

- 6 Unto my supplication, Lord, Give ear, and to the cry
 Of my *incessant* prayers afford
 Thy hearing graciously.
- 7 I, in the day of my distress, Will call on thee for aid;

PSALM LXXXVI

For thou wilt grant me free access, And answer what I pray'd.

8 Like thee among the gods is none, O Lord; nor any works Of all that other gods have done Like to thy glorious works.

9 The Nations all whom thou hast made Shall come, and all shall frame To bow them low before thee, Lord,

And glorify thy Name.

Io For great thou art, and wonders great
By thy strong hand are done;
Thou in thy everlasting seat,
Remainest God alone.

II Teach me, O Lord, thy way most right;
I in thy truth will bide;
To fear thy Name my heart unite;
So shall it never slide.

12 Thee will I praise, O Lord my God, Thee honour and adoreWith my whole heart, and blaze abroad Thy Name for evermore.

13 For great thy mercy is toward me, And thou hast freed my soul, Even from the lowest hell set free, From deepest darkness foul.

14 O God, the proud against me rise,
And violent men are met
To seek my life, and in their eyes
No fear of thee have set.

(B 246)
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PSALM LXXXVI

- 15 But thou, Lord, art the God most mild, Readiest thy grace to shew, Slow to be angry, and art styl'd Most merciful, most true.
- 16 O, turn to me thy face at length, And me have mercy on; Unto thy servant give thy strength, And save thy handmaid's son.
- 17 Some sign of good to me afford, And let my foes then see, And be asham'd; because thou, Lord, Dost help and comfort me.

Psalm LXXXVII



- I Among the holy mountains high Is his foundation fast; There seated in his sanctuary, His temple there is plac'd.
- 2 Sion's fair gates the Lord loves more Than all the dwellings fair Of Jacob's land, though there be store, And all within his care.
- 3 City of God, most glorious things Of thee *abroad* are spoke;
- 4 I mention Egypt, where proud kings Did our forefathers yoke.
 - I mention Babel to my friends, Philistia full of scorn;
 - And Tyre with Ethiops' utmost ends, Lo this man there was born:
- 5 But twice that praise shall in our ear Be said of Sion last;
 - This and this man was born in her; High God shall fix her fast.
- 6 The Lord shall write it in a scroll That ne'er shall be out-worn,
 - When he the nations doth inroll, That this man there was born.

PSALM LXXXVII

7 Both they who sing, and they who dance,

With sacred songs are there;

In thee fresh brooks and soft streams glance,

And all my fountains clear.

Psalm LXXXVIII

- I Lord God, that dost me save and keep, All day to thee I cry; And all night long before thee weep, Before thee prostrate lie.
- 2 Into thy presence let my prayer

 With sighs devout ascend;
 And to my cries, that ceaseless are,
 Thine ear with favour bend.
- 3 For, cloy'd with woes and trouble store, Surcharg'd my soul doth lie; My life, at Death's uncheerful door, Unto the grave draws nigh.
- 4 Reckon'd I am with them that pass
 Down to the dismal pit;
 I am a man, but weak alas!
 And for that name unfit.
- 5 From life discharg'd and parted quite Among the dead to sleep;
 And like the slain in bloody fight,
 That in the grave lie deep.
 Whom thou rememberest no more,
 Dost never more regard,
 Them, from thy hand deliver'd o'er,

PSALM LXXXVIII

0	Thou in the lowest pit projouna	
	Hast set me all forlorn,	
	Where thickest darkness hovers round	,
	In horrid deeps to mourn.	

In horrid deeps to mourn.
7 Thy wrath, from which no shelter saves,

Full sore doth press on me;
Thou break'st upon me all thy waves,
And all thy waves break me.

8 Thou dost my friends from me estrange, And mak'st me odious, Me to them odious, for they change,

And I here pent up thus.

9 Through sorrow, and affliction great, Mine eye grows dim and dead; Lord, all the day I thee entreat,

My hands to thee I spread.

10 Wilt thou do wonders on the dead? Shall the deceas'd arise, And praise thee from their loathsome bed

With pale and hollow eyes?

On whom the grave hath hold?

Or they, who in perdition dwell,

Thy faithfulness unfold?

12 In darkness can thy mighty hand
Or wondrous acts be known?
Thy justice in the gloomy land,
Of dark oblivion?

13 But I to thee, O Lord, do cry,

Ere yet my life be spent;

PSALM LXXXVIII

And up to thee my prayer doth hie, Each morn, and thee prevent.

14 Why wilt thou, Lord, my soul forsake, And hide thy face from me,

That am already bruis'd, and shake
With terrour sent from thee?
Bruis'd and afflicted, and so low
As ready to expire;
While I thy terrours undergo.

While I thy terrours undergo, Astonish'd with thine ire.

16 Thy fierce wrath over me doth flow;
Thy threatenings cut me through:

17 All day they round about me go, Like waves they me pursue.

18 Lover and friend thou hast remov'd,
And sever'd from me far:
They fly me now whom I have lov'd,

And as in darkness are.

Psalm I

DONE INTO VERSE, 1653

Bless'd is the man who hath not walk'd astray

In counsel of the wicked, and i' the way Of sinners hath not stood, and in the seat Of scorners hath not sat. But in the great Iehovah's law is ever his delight,

And in his law he studies day and night. He shall be as a tree which planted grows By watery streams, and in his season knows To yield his fruit, and his leaf shall not fall, And what he takes in hand shall prosper all. Not so the wicked, but as chaff which fann'd

The wind drives, so the wicked shall not stand

In judgement, or abide their trial then, Nor sinners in the assembly of just men, For the Lord knows the upright way of the just,

And the way of bad men to ruin must.

Psalm II

DONE AUG. 8, 1653. TERZETTI

Why do the Gentiles tumult, and the Nations

Muse a vain thing, the kings of the earth upstand

With power, and princes in their congregations

Lay deep their plots together through each

Against the Lord and his Messiah dear? Let us break off, say they, by strength of hand

Their bonds, and cast from us, no more to wear,

Their twisted cords: He, who in heaven doth dwell,

Shall laugh; the Lord shall scoff them; then, severe,

Speak to them in his wrath, and in his fell And fierce ire trouble them; but I, saith he.

PSALM II

Anointed have my King (though ye rebel)

On Sion my holy hill. A firm decree I will declare: The Lord to me hath said, Thou art my Son, I have begotten thee

This day, ask of me, and the grant is made;
As thy possession I on thee bestow

The Heathen; and, as thy conquest to be sway'd,

Earth's utmost bounds: them shalt thou bring full low

With iron scepter bruis'd, and them disperse

Like to a potter's vessel shiver'd so.

And now be wise at length, ye kings averse,

Be taught, ye judges of the earth; with fear

Jehovah serve, and let your joy converse With trembling; kiss the Son lest he appear

In anger, and ye perish in the way, If once his wrath take fire, like fuel sere. Happy all those who have in him their stay!

Psalm III

AUG. 9, 1653

When he fled from Absalom

Lord, how many are my foes!

How many those,

That in arms against me rise!

Many are they,

That of my life distrustfully thus say; No help for him in God there lies. But thou, Lord, art my shield, my glory,

Thee, through my story,

The exalter of my head I count:
Aloud I cried

Unto Jehovah: He full soon replied, And heard me from his holy mount. I lay and slept; I wak'd again;

For my sustain

Was the Lord. Of many millions
The populous rout

I fear not, though, encamping round about,

They pitch against me their pavilions. Rise, Lord; save me, my God; for Thou

Hast smote e'er now

PSALM III

On the cheek-bone all my foes,
Of men abhorr'd
Hast broke the teeth. This help was
from the Lord;
Thy blessing on thy people flows.

Psalm IV

AUG. 10, 1653

Answer me when I call,
God of my righteousness;
In straits, and in distress,
Thou didst me disinthrall
And set at large; now spare,
Now pity me, and hear my earnest prayer.
Great ones, how long will ye
My glory have in scorn?
How long be thus forborn
Still to love vanity?
To love, to seek, to prize,

Things false and vain, and nothing else but lies?

Yet know the Lord hath chose, Chose to himself apart, The good and meek of heart: (For whom to choose He knows) Jehovah from on high

Will hear my voice, what time to him I cry. Be aw'd, and do not sin;

PSALM IV

Speak to your hearts alone, Upon your beds, each one, And be at peace within. Offer the offerings just

Of righteousness, and in Jehovah trust.

Many there be that say,
Who yet will show us good?
Talking like this world's brood;
But, Lord, thus let me pray;
On us lift up the light,

Lift up the favour of thy countenance bright.

Into my heart more joy
And gladness thou hast put,
Than when a year of glut
Their stores doth over-cloy,
And from their plenteous grounds

With vast encrease their corn and wine abounds.

In peace at once will I Both lay me down and sleep; For thou alone dost keep Me safe where'er I lie; As in a rocky cell

Thou, Lord, alone, in safety mak'st me dwell.

Psalm V

AUG. 12, 1653

Jehovah, to my words give ear,
My meditation weigh;
The voice of my complaining hear,
My King and God; for unto thee I pray.
Jehovah, thou my early voice

Shalt in the morning hear;
I' the morning I to thee with choice
Will rank my prayers, and watch till thou
appear.

For thou art not a God that takes
In wickedness delight;
Evil with thee no biding makes;
Fools or mad men stand not within thy
sight.

All workers of iniquity

Thou hat'st; and them unblest
Thou wilt destroy that speak a lye;
The bloody and guileful man God doth
detest.

But, I will, in thy mercies dear, Thy numerous mercies, go

PSALM V

Into thy house; I, in thy fear, Will towards thy holy temple worship low. Lord, lead me in thy righteousness, Lead me, because of those That do observe if I transgress; Set thy ways right before, where my step goes.

For in his faltering mouth unstable, No word is firm or sooth: Their inside, troubles miserable: An open grave their throat; their tongue

they smooth.

God, find them guilty, let them fall By their own counsels quell'd: Push them in their rebellions all Still on; for against thee they have rebell'd. Then all, who trust in thee, shall bring Their joy; while thou from blame

Defend'st them, they shall ever sing And shall triumph in thee, who love thy

Name.

For thou, Jehovah, wilt be found To bless the just man still; As with a shield, thou wilt surround Him with thy lasting favour and good will.

Psalm VI

AUG. 13, 1653

Lord, in thine anger do not reprehend me, Nor in thy hot displeasure me correct; Pity me, Lord, for I am much deject, And very weak and faint; heal and amend me:

For all my bones, that even with anguish ake,

Are troubled, yea my soul is troubled sore;

And thou, O Lord, how long? Turn, Lord; restore

My soul; O save me for thy goodness sake:

For in death no remembrance is of thee; Who in the grave can celebrate thy praise?

Wearied I am with sighing out my days; Nightly my couch I make a kind of sea; My bed I water with my tears; mine eye

Through grief consumes, is waxen old and dark

I' the midst of all mine enemies that mark.

(B 246)

PSALM VI

Depart, all ye that work iniquity,

Depart from me; for the voice of my weeping

The Lord hath heard; the Lord hath

heard my prayer;

My supplication with acceptance fair

The Lord will own, and have me in his keeping.

Mine enemies shall all be blank, and dash'd With much confusion; then, grown red with shame,

They shall return in haste the way they came.

And in a moment shall be quite abash'd.

Psalm VII

AUG. 14, 1653

Upon the words of Chush the Benjamite against him

Lord, my God, to thee I fly; Save me and secure me under Thy protection, while I cry; Lest, as a lion (and no wonder) He haste to tear my soul asunder, Tearing, and no rescue nigh.

Lord, my God, if I have thought Or done this; if wickedness Be in my hands; if I have wrought Ill to him that meant me peace; Or to him have rendered less, And not freed my foe for nought;

Let the enemy pursue my soul, And overtake it; let him tread My life down to the earth, and roll In the dust my glory dead, In the dust and there, out-spread, Lodge it with dishonour foul.

PSALM VII

Rise, Jehovah, in thine ire, Rouse thyself amidst the rage Of my foes that urge like fire; And wake for me, their fury asswage Judgement here thou didst engage And command, which I desire.

So the assemblies of each nation Will surround thee, seeking right; Thence to thy glorious habitation Return on high, and in their sight. Jehovah judgeth most upright All people from the world's foundation

Judge me, Lord; be judge in this According to my righteousness, And the innocence which is Upon me: cause at length to cease Of evil men the wickedness, And their power that do amiss.

But the just establish fast, Since thou art the just God that tries Hearts and reins. On God is cast My defence, and in him lies, In him who, both just and wise, Saves the upright of heart at last.

God is a just judge and severe, And God is every day offended;

PSALM VII

If the unjust will not forbear, His sword he whets, his bow hath bended Already, and for him intended The tools of death, that waits him near.

(His arrows purposely made he For them that persecute.) Behold, He travels big with vanity; Trouble he hath conceiv'd of old, As in a womb; and from that mould Hath at length brought forth a lie.

He digg'd a pit, and delv'd it deep, And fell into the pit he made; His mischief, that due course doth keep Turns on his head; and his ill trade Of violence will, undelay'd, Fall on his crown with ruin steep.

Then will I Jehovah's praise According to his justice raise, And sing the Name and Deity Of Jehovah the Most High.

Psalm VIII

AUG. 14, 1653

O Jehovah our Lord, how wondrous great And glorious is thy Name through all the earth!

So as above the heavens thy praise to set Out of the tender mouths of latest birth.

Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings

Hast founded strength, because of all thy foes,

To stint the enemy, and slack the avenger's brow,

That bends his rage thy Providence to oppose.

When I behold thy heavens, thy fingers' art, The moon, and stars, which thou so bright hast set

In the pure firmament; then saith my heart, O, what is man that thou rememberest yet,

PSALM VIII

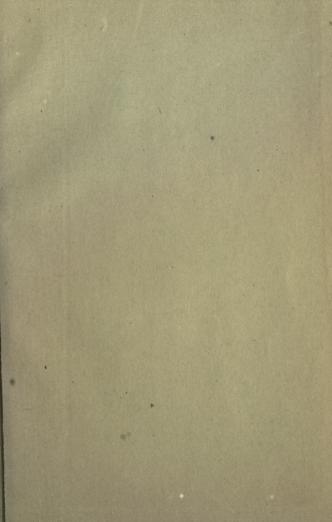
- And think'st upon him; or of man begot, That him thou visit'st, and of him art found!
- Scarce to be less than gods, thou mad'st his lot,
 - With honour and with state thou hast him crown'd.
- O'er the works of thy hand thou mad'st him lord,
- Thou hast put all under his lordly feet; All flocks, and herds, by thy commanding word,
 - All beasts that in the field or forest meet,
- Fowl of the heavens, and fish that through the wet
 - Sea-paths in shoals do slide, and know no dearth.
- O Jehovah our Lord, how wondrous great And glorious is thy Name through all the earth!

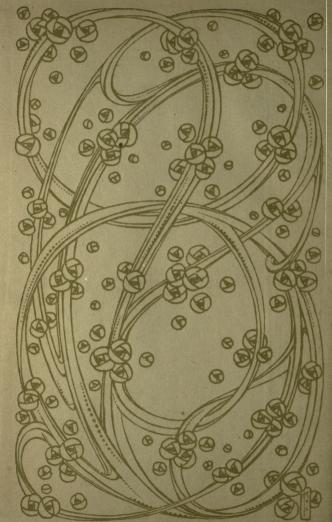
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